

CREATING A SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY:
TEACHING THE COMPONENTS
OF GIVING

Michael W. Armstrong

B.A, Hampton University, 1985
M.Div., Wesley Theological Seminary, 1990

Mentors

Daryl Hairston, DMin
Lucius M. Dalton, DMin

A FINAL DOCUMENT SUBMITTED TO
THE DOCTORAL STUDIES COMMITTEE
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Dayton, Ohio
May 2016

**United Theological Seminary
Dayton, OH**

**Faculty Approval Page
Doctor of Ministry Final Project**

**CREATING A SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY:
TEACHING THE COMPONENTS
OF GIVING**

by

Michael W. Armstrong

United Theological Seminary, 2016

Mentors

Daryl Hairston, DMin
Lucius M. Dalton, DMin

Date: _____

Approved:

Faculty Mentor:

Associate Dean of Doctoral Studies:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
DEDICATION.....	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER	
1. MINISTRY FOCUS	7
2. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	28
3. HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS	62
4. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	88
5. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS.....	106
6. PROJECT ANALYSIS.....	121
APPENDIX	
A. LETTER TO COLESVILLE MEMBERS.....	169
B. PRE AND POST TEST	172
C. BIBLE STUDIES.....	178
D. COMMENTS ON CUMC QUESTIONNAIRE	184
BIBLIOGRAPHY	186

ABSTRACT

CREATING A SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY: TEACHING THE COMPONENTS OF GIVING

by
Michael W. Armstrong
United Theological Seminary, 2016

Mentors
Daryl Hairston, DMin
Lucius M. Dalton, DMin

The context is Colesville United Methodist Church in Silver Springs, MD. The purpose is to teach the components of giving from a biblical, theological and practical perspective, which will encourage congregants to give generously to their local church in gratitude to God who has graciously given to humanity. The hypothesis is that by teaching the components of giving, parishioners will embrace stewardship as a way of life as opposed to viewing it as an obligation. The study will be qualitative in nature and will utilize a pre- and a post-test as the measurement instruments through a series of Bible Study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Appreciation is given to God for inspiring and providing the opportunity to conduct this meaningful work. This project research is the culmination of many hours of encouragement and support from many people. I would like to thank all of the churches that have helped to shape and teach me, but especially the McKendree-Simms-Brookland United Methodist Church, which gave birth to this project and Colesville United Methodist Church which brought it to fruition. This would not have been possible without the prayers and support of both churches.

I would like to extend special thanks to the two sets of mentors who have provided valuable leadership and support to this project, namely Dr. Ivan Hicks, Dr. H. Beecher Hicks, and Dr. Marva Hughes in the Gardner C. Taylor Fellows group. Within the Collaborative Leadership I express my gratitude to Dr. Daryl Hairston and Dr. Lucius Dalton, and Dr. Rychie Breidenstein. Each mentor's wisdom, instruction and insights were invaluable and appreciated. The researcher is extremely grateful to all of the Doctor of Ministry colleagues both past and present for their valuable insights, discussion and encouragement.

In addition, this researcher would like to give particular thanks to Dr. William B. McClain and Dr. James M. Shopshire who served as professional associates. This researcher not only thanks them for their assistance with this project, but for being such excellent former professors and present colleagues in ministry. Also, I was blessed by the

exceptional editorial expertise of Dr. Lori D. Spears, without whose technical skill this research would not have been what it is.

Lastly and most importantly, I would like to thank all of my family for their love, prayers, support, encouragement and patience during this arduous process. I will ever be indebted to my wife, Judy and children, Chelsea and Michael, Jr. who were willing to sacrifice precious time with me so that this project could be completed. Also, a special thanks to Sandra Yates, my sister-in-law, Candace Yates, my niece, and Diane Holt, my cousin for reading and offering valuable insights with their “view from the pew,” perspective.

DEDICATION

This research document is dedicated to all those faithful saints who scraped their pennies, nickels and dimes to build the churches that nurtured me in the faith. A special note of dedication is extended to Walter Gordon, my grandfather, who took me by the hand to show me how to be a Christian and started me out as a counter in the church at the tender age of eight years old. I also dedicate the work to those churches that have helped to shape my ministry and me. And to my wife, Judy, children, Chelsea and Michael, Jr. and to the extended family that continue to love, encourage, and support me through this journey.

INTRODUCTION

As a counter at the age of eight years old in the finance room of my local church, the experience helped to shape awareness that giving and finances were important to the mission and ministry of the local church. There was nothing extraordinary in this early experience in the local church. However, in retrospect, there was always an intellectual curiosity about stewardship and finances in the local church as it affects the church's vision, mission and ministry.

With the 2008 economic recession, many churches in America experienced an astonishing decline in financial giving which has affected the mission and ministry of those churches. Some colleagues in ministry shared that they were re-visiting their budget projections, contemplating reducing staff and scaling back missions and ministry budgets. This decline in financial stewardship affected the churches' abilities to be faithful to God and to respond to the community's needs. The decline has affected all churches to some degree. The purpose of this study is to explore the biblical, theological, social, psychological and practical factors that may contribute to the financial giving patterns of members of a suburban multi-racial church, in an effort to create a culture of generosity in giving. The church that will be used for this study is the Colesville United Methodist Church in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Colesville United Methodist Church is located in a suburban, middle class to upper middle class neighborhood, with a growing "pocket" of poverty in the East end of

the county where the church is located. This church has an aging congregation, which has maintained its membership over the last several years, but will soon experience membership decline through attrition if it does not begin to attract new members. The church continues to be a growing stakeholder in the community through its various community ministries. What has given this church its purpose and vibrancy is its outward focused mission and ministry. The church now struggles to maintain what has been its *raison d'etre* because of its lack of financial resources.

This study's big question is: How does a local church's leadership create and foster a culture of generous givers and improve its financial resources? In attempting to understand the biblical, theological, social, psychological and practical reasons church members give, it is also important to discover if there are any best practices which can be explored to change an existing financial giving culture to a new generous giving culture. A generous giving culture moves beyond the traditional tithe as obligation, as in Exodus 36:2-7 and 2 Corinthians 8:1-12.

Some research indicates that giving has been hampered by the church having no compelling vision for the use of money given, congregants having less than adequate stewardship training and congregants not seeing their giving as an investment in the kingdom of God.¹

Chapter one is the ministry focus which has been shaped by the totality of my life experiences as they intersected with the lead of the spirit of God and the will of God for my life. Growing up and actively participating in the church from a very early age exposed me to the mechanisms of the church and the movement of God within the

¹ George Barna, "Americans Donate Billions to Charity, But Giving to Churches has Declined,"

church. As my understanding of God matured, "church music," to which I was exposed both inside and outside of the church, nurtured an inkling of my "call to ministry."

Inkling grew into a passion after mentoring, prophesy and a triggering event solidified what I knew in my heart I was called to do. Moving from collegiate ministry to pastoring in the United Methodist Church, I have been led by the spirit of God to teach His people to live a life of "generous giving" to reduce poverty in our local and regional community.

The second chapter focuses on the biblical perspective with the thesis settled in Exodus 36:2-7 and 2 Corinthians 8:1-12. Both texts express cogent examples of the generous giving of the people of God in the Old and New Testament. In the Exodus text, Moses asked the people of Israel to give sacrificial offerings towards the completion of the sanctuary. They were so generous with their gifts that the craftsmen were overwhelmed and Moses told the people that their generous giving was more than enough. In the New Testament text, Paul tells the people of Corinth about the generous giving of the Macedonians. They gave generously with abundant joy through their own suffering and lack until Paul asked them to cease in their giving due to the overflow of gifts. Paul likened the generosity of the Macedonians to give freely despite their own lowly circumstances to the cheerful generosity of Jesus towards the poor. Both Moses and Paul were God's conduits to teach the people the virtue and blessing of generous giving. He owns everything and needs nothing. However, the Holy Spirit influences people to give in faith because God dwells where the people give freely. It is also the African American tradition to give generously to the church, although that dynamic is declining with recent generations.

Chapter three provides a historical perspective of generous giving. Malachi 3:10 is the cornerstone of tithing. "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of host." For centuries, the church has viewed the tithe as the smallest increment of sacrificial giving – the tenth – to honor the generosity of God. The "first fruits" are given to sustain the church so it can support the poor and sick, and send missionaries to teach and preach the gospel. The African American culture of giving the tithe can be traced back to Colonial times when free blacks established their own churches and businesses to offset the discriminatory practices they faced in a majority of communities. The black church became the focal point for political, social, cultural, educational, and philanthropic development of African Americans. Generous giving surpasses the tithe. The tithe is giving out of obedience. Generous giving is cheerfully given out of desire. Both are to reciprocate the grace of God in providing for His people.

The fourth chapter provides a theological foundation on the concept of giving generously. The church is not the only organizational entity that gives: businesses, schools, and people give to support the things that interest them. The great theologian, John Wesley, urged Christians to earn and save so they could give more to help the church and the poor while wasting less, particularly their time and talents. Wesley's spiritual discipline of stewardship integrated the concept of saving into the Christian tradition of earning and giving. Saving allowed for giving generously while maintaining enough to live and even prosper. The reality is that God owns everything; Wesley promoted good stewardship of God's possessions He graciously gave to us. He cautioned earning and saving for the sake of becoming rich and forsaking the poor. For this reason,

Wesley encouraged frugality and humility. Practical theology came into form in the eighteenth century. Practical theology focused on a process for church guidance, church governance and church service to deal with issues in a proactive manner before they became overwhelming problems. Practical theology is not unlike the practicality of Stephen Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, viewed through a spiritual guidance of the Holy Spirit. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians about giving from the heart. The theology of generous giving is predicated on earning and saving to be able to give under the unction of the Holy Spirit while maintaining enough to live.

Chapter five is the theoretical view and its foundation is established through the use of the Notre Dame Center for the Study of Religion and Society's vision of generosity. The study describes "the disposition and practice of giving of one's financial resources, time, and talents (including, for example, charitable financial giving, volunteering, and the dedication of one's gifts for the welfare of others and the common good)."² Helping or giving to the poor is not necessarily altruistic. Charitable giving is altruistic where nothing is expected in return. However, giving is not altruistic if the giver receives a charitable tax deduction, for example. Another example of helping is philanthropy. The tithe is the most common type of charitable giving. Researchers have concluded that people are more inclined to give charitably if they receive something in return, such as a tax deduction. Nine mechanisms for charitable giving are discussed: awareness of need; solicitation; weighing the cost and benefits of helping; altruism; reputation and social standing; psychological impacts of giving; values; and efficacy. Giving to an organization, such as a church, may remove the giver from the recipient of

² Jessica L. Collett and Christopher A. Morrissey, "The Social Psychology of Generosity: The State of Current Interdisciplinary Research," *Science of Generosity* (October 2007).

the services. Some philanthropy is done publicly and often for recognition such as establishing a fund for a special purpose, e.g., the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The more people earn, the less proportionately they give of their income than poor people. We give because we are social animals who have a desire to help others.

The research is closed out with chapter six, where the project analysis is provided. Various statistical processes were used to research the concept of generous giving. Research samples were taken from fifteen subjects of various ages, incomes, education and racial backgrounds. The participants volunteered to engage in the study. The research was conducted during the course of five Bible Study sessions on "Generous Giving." The first was on the Exodus 35:1-36:7 text. The second Bible Study was centered on the 2 Corinthians 8:1-12 text. The third Bible Study session, "Stewardship: It All Belongs To God," was based on Matthew 25:13-30. The fourth Bible Study, "Stewardship: It's a Matter of the Heart, Blessed Babies and A Miserable Millionaire," was derived from Luke 15:18-30. The fifth and final Bible Study, "Stewardship: What are We Going to Do About It," was from the teachings of John Wesley and Luke 16. Each participant was given the pre- and post-test to determine their knowledge of the subject of generous giving.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

My spiritual journey started at birth being raised in a loving Christian home. I attended the family churches of both my mother and my father in Washington, DC: the Greater First Baptist Church and Mount Airy Baptist Church, respectively. My primary church home was Greater First Baptist Church, where the Reverend Edward Thomas served as pastor. Special church and family events were attended at Mt. Airy. From infancy I was in the Sunday school's nursery, and after a few years was active in the Baptist Training Union. Church was a normal part of my life and it was expected to attend regularly and to be an active participant. I enjoyed being at church and the fellowship that church provided, but like many children found it extremely boring, except for the music.

Since my youth I was engaged in various ministries throughout the church, which included the Youth for Christ Choir at Greater First. At an early age I connected with God through music. The music was a means of expressing one's exuberance and understanding about God. This was also my introduction to leadership experience in the church, where I was elected the chaplain of the choir. In other words, this is where I learned to pray extemporaneously in public. The dedication to this task would later lead to becoming a junior deacon.

The importance and impact of the need of Sunday school was implanted early in my life as well. The need for God was initially placed on God coming to my rescue in the time of trouble. The need for God was initially general knowledge, but eventually had meaningful impact as I matured. At seven years of age, just a few days before my eighth birthday, I was hit by a car while riding my bicycle and was thrown, according to witnesses, about ten to fifteen feet in the air while the bicycle traveled about twenty feet down the street. I sustained broken bones in one leg, and one arm had several abrasions. When help arrived, although “shaken up,” I was conscious and coherent enough to tell the authorities how to reach my parents. Knowing that the accident left me “badly hurt,” there was reservation to return to the hospital. The reservation was rooted in previous hospital visits as a result of asthma attacks. The words of my Sunday school teacher, Reatha Kelly, came rushing back and had new meaning to me: “If you ever find yourself in trouble you can call on God” and “if you invite him into your life, God will come in... because you need him in your life.” It was at that moment that I offered an extemporaneous prayer that had meaning to accept God into my life and ask for God’s help in my troubling situation. I came to understand the timeliness of “God’s Word coming alive.” A newfound sense of peace pervaded my presence and I was no longer anxious or afraid of what was going to happen to me at the hospital. The speculation that I might not walk again or would walk with a limp was given. However, I exclaimed to my parents “It will be all right because God will take care of it.” The continued witness from Mrs. Kelly became consistent within my life and she encouraged me by stating that I possessed special gifts, anointing, and prophecy.

The hymnody and gospel music that I heard and sung began to shape my early theology and provide new meaning. Now, songs like “Just When I Need Him Most,” “He’s An On Time God,” “Yes God is Real,” and “There’s a Bright Side Somewhere” had new meaning because of the existential crisis. It was through the accident that God became “real” and God became known as “help in the midst of trouble.” After the accident, I became adamant about being baptized. Making this announcement to my mother, she indicated that I was too young and would not understand the meaning of the baptism. I assured her that I was ready for baptism and explained that baptism was for those who invited Jesus into their lives. Further, I assured her that I had invited Jesus into my life and that I was now “saved” because Jesus had saved me in the car accident. My mother took me to the pastor because the church traditionally baptized those who were twelve and older. After a consultation with the pastor it was decided that I was indeed ready and understood the meaning of baptism. The moment was memorable and I was happy to make the commitment to God through baptism.

Some of my most memorable moments at Greater First came when I was a junior deacon. As a junior deacon, I experienced the role and responsibility of a deacon from my grandfather, Walter Gordon. My grandfather was not only a deacon of the church and family member, but a role model, mentor, and best friend. I followed in the footsteps of my grandfather, which shaped my understanding of a Christian as a “servant leader.” As a junior deacon, I sat with the deacons, served as a counter in the finance room, prayed for and visited the sick, and presented the sick with monetary support when needed. Further, sitting on the front seat with the deacons required listening to the sermon and later participating in discussion at home. Pastor Thomas was always a mentor to me even

when I transferred to another church. In fact, once I accepted the call to ministry, Pastor Thomas invited me to preach at least once a year and offered his sage advice and encouragement.

The appreciation for Christian music was enhanced by singing with the District of Columbia Chapter of the James Cleveland's Gospel Music Workshop of America (GMWA). It was through the GMWA that I became acquainted with a variety of sacred music, learned basic music theory, was introduced to ecstatic worship, and gained an appreciation for the basic spiritual disciplines of prayer and fasting. I learned through the choir's periods of fasting that fasting is about self denial in order to connect with God, and that it has nothing to do with dieting. The fundamentals of Christianity were learned through early Morning Prayer services and all night revivals for spiritual renewal at the age of twelve. These activities taught me fundamentally that Christianity was not just about having a "good time" in worship, but about self sacrifice and being disciplined being committed to God in your Christian life.

While singing with the GMWA, I learned a variety of worship styles of the Black church including spiritually reflective, highly charismatic, formally written to informal un-written liturgy, quietist, ecstatic, Roman Catholic, Pentecostal, and Holiness. It was amazing, awe inspiring, exciting, and interesting. Based on this experience and embarking on a quest to understand the activity of the Holy Spirit, which was being expressed in "shouting" and "holy dancing." This more ecstatic, charismatic, highly emotional experience was entirely different from the cerebral understanding of the Holy Spirit as a guide to life and teacher of truth.

There were several memorable revival services held by the DC chapter GMWA that were formational and foundational. During one revival series of services, the “indwelling” of the Holy Spirit was felt. I did not jump and shout, but similar to the earlier God encounter, I knew I was in the presence of God, and more importantly, God was with me. Enough spiritual maturity was not fully developed to understand the experience; yet I knew God was present and there was a strong appreciation for the “God encounter.” The request had been made for a spiritual experience and God had given it. Although I was not Wesleyan at that time, I felt like Wesley in that my “heart had been strangely warmed.”

As the revival services continued, I became aware of a “slipping” away from God, because of the desire to do other things. I experienced a heavy conviction and a nagging urge to go to the altar and confess my sin and rededicate to Christ. Freedom from “bad” thoughts and behavior was granted and it felt good. This process was a reaffirmation of faith that was established at the age of seven. During the last GMWA revival I became acquainted with Reverend David Durham, who would become my most influential spiritual mentor and pastor. In hearing Pastor Durham preach I was “mesmerized” by his biblical preaching style. Reverend Durham had an uncanny ability to memorize large portions of scripture and recall them when needed while walking around and preaching. He also had a unique way of applying scripture to life that was intriguing.

A great appreciation for the Bible was obtained by sitting under Reverend Durham’s leadership. After hearing Reverend Durham several times, I transferred my membership to the Mount Sinai Baptist Church where Reverend Durham served as pastor. This was a difficult decision to make because of the special relationship with my

grandfather, who I attended church with each Sunday. However, after a “heart to heart talk” with God and my grandfather, it was clear I needed to move on to continue my Christian growth and development. Although I had gained much at Greater First Baptist, I knew the opportunities were limited in general for young people. The experience was expanded, because of my grandfather’s mentoring and training.

Reverend Durham perceived a “calling” that he decided to nurture. Pastor Durham told me I “had the mark” (meaning calling). The nurturing process began with attending Youth Bible study. The Adult Bible study prompted me to feed the growing appetite of knowing more about God. The appetite was further fed by inquiring, reading the Bible, studying, and investing in supportive literature. As a result, more questions were raised such as “If God is just, how come bad things happen to good people? If God created everything, did God create evil? Who did Adam’s children marry? How could Moses have written Genesis and the creation story if he was not born yet? How does God justify war when God is supposed to be a God of love? How could Jesus be sinless when he got angry and overturned the tables in the temple?” Often the responses were not satisfactory, because I wanted to know more about this God I was learning to love and serve. As a result of my questions, I was learning the length, depth, and width of God’s love for humanity, meaning God’s love was so selfless, so sacrificial that God would give God’s own son, Jesus, to atone for humanity’s sin. I learned that the greatest thing one could share was the Word of God and one’s own testimony. Much of the central message of the gospel was starting to take shape in my mind and beginning to reach my heart.

The Young Adult choir served as a nurturer of the spiritual gifts that were given by participating in the choir. In this choir I encountered a group of young people who

were on a serious spiritual quest. There were approximately twenty people who sang with this choir who were called to ministry. It was while singing in this choir that I first started to have an “urge” to preach, which was initially ignored. It was what I would later learn was an “irresistible urge to preach.”¹

One life changing moment in my Christian journey happened when the choir members visited Reverend Durham at his home due to sickness. They went to visit with no expectations, except to visit. Yet, it became a God moment when Pastor Durham would give a prophecy (although he might have been uncomfortable using that term) about each choir member’s life. He shared what he saw in each of his visitor’s lives. Reverend Durham indicated that he saw me actively engaged in the preaching ministry. We were awe-struck and quite speechless (which was not a norm for this group). The group that was once laughing, talking, singing, and praying left in silence. We knew God was at work in some unusual way, which was unbelievable. Eventually, everything Reverend Durham said came to pass in each person’s life.

While trying to avoid this growing urge and, now, prophecy, I began to associate with a number of young preachers and aspirants to the ministry. I began attending the Ministerial Fellowship, a group of Washington Metropolitan preachers young in the ministry. Pastors facilitated this group and mentored the participants in various topic areas. The fellowship assisted in developing my ministerial identity. Soon I would have answers to the questions: “Am I really called to preach? Can I do this? Have I counted the cost of being in ministry? And, if I am called to ministry, is there any way to get out of this?” It was through this group that I had a chance as an aspirant to ministry to test my

¹ William H. Myers, *The Irresistible Urge to Preach* (New York, NY: Aaron Press, 1992).

gifts for ministry without having to accept the responsibility of ministry. This opportunity was fruitful in helping me to clarify my gifts for ministry and my call to ministry, although the call was rejected. In retrospect, I believe I rejected the call after witnessing the challenges of preachers and pastors by the Christian community. I was not yet willing to accept William Myers' premise that "God's yes [is] louder than [your] no."²

Mount Sinai matured me in age, spirituality, Bible knowledge, understanding of God, and leadership skills. Yet, there was one more area of growth that would be explored before leaving Mount Sinai Church to go to college: evangelistic outreach. Reverend Durham would literally lead the congregation out of the church and into the community to reach the "unreached." The congregants thought it was crazy to get a permit to parade around the community and set up a Christian block party at the intersection of Fourteenth and U Streets, in Washington, DC, which at the time was noted for crime, violence, drugs, and prostitution. It was known as one of the worst intersections of the city. The church paraded through the streets, passing out tracts, singing, witnessing with Reverend Durham preaching at certain intervals. When the church arrived at the block party, the stage was set to continue what had been happening all along the way. It was during this time that Reverend Durham was like a "mother eagle stirring the nest," and without prior warning, he put the microphone in my hand and told me to preach "Good News" to the people. It was a scary, exciting, humbling, and totally heart-wrenching experience all at once. I knew I was not formally prepared, but God had been preparing me for this moment for a long time. God met me there and "put words into my mouth." It was a transforming moment in the life of that congregation, the people

² William H. Myers, *God's Yes Was Louder Than My No* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1994).

in the community who accepted Christ and went to drug rehabilitation, and especially, for me to have an opportunity to exercise my gift. Yet, during that moment, I was not convinced preaching as a vocation was my chosen path. In fact, I was preparing for college and my intentions were to put God, the church, and my calling on the proverbial shelf.

At Hampton Institute (later renamed Hampton University), the plan was to experience my newfound freedom. It was time to “sow some wild oats” and “party hardy.” The plan was derailed in meeting my roommate, only to learn that he was a preacher and his newly found best friend was a “preacher’s kid” who was struggling with his call to ministry. I knew immediately this was some kind of God setup and that line from a gospel song I had heard, “He’ll build a fence all around you,” was in effect. I felt at the time that this was God “interference” in my life, but later could confess it was God’s intervention in my life. Despite the “interference,” the desire to live on the “wild side” of life still existed. Although there was that “pull” and intentional desire to be “wild,” there was an internal “pull” of God’s spirit that would only let me venture so far. Despite the pull to experience the “wild side,” I still participated in chapel (or church), participated with the Student Christian Association, sang for a year with the gospel choir, and led the chapel’s Tuesday night Bible study and Vesper Prayer service. While in college, I “refereed matches” between conservative and liberal Christian students. Previous experiences taught acceptance to a diversity of religious expression, and that God could be found in them all. One could appreciate religion without necessarily appropriating a variety of religious expressions. I was called upon to interrupt the differences in religious expression, and to help students co-exist with each other whose

expression was different. One of the most rewarding opportunities was to be introduced to the Hampton University Minister's and Organist Choir Guild Conference. As a student, the chaplain, Reverend Michael Battle, hired me to tape the conference sessions, which exposed me to black preaching and sacred music. Reverend Battle also influenced me to start taking several academic religious courses. I gained an appreciation for the academic rigor as well as the opportunity to struggle with some of those earlier perplexing questions that had plagued me.

Upon graduation from Hampton University, the plan was to embark upon a graduate degree in sociology, but I ended up in a sales career in medical and laboratory supplies, which was completely unfulfilling and served as a reminder that I was not doing what I was called to do. The ministerial calling urge came back even stronger than before and it could not be ignored. I still thought I could ignore it. God finally had to allow one of those "earth shattering" moments to come into my life through a friend's painful experience.

In receiving a call from a college friend who told me that she was pregnant and planning on having an abortion. This call "shook" me to the core. All of my notions and theology about the taking of life were challenged. Although keenly aware that women had the right over their bodies, I was challenged to support my friend through this difficult decision. The crisis was life changing; and I had to vicariously experience the pain and suffering of my friend and show empathy. A supportive response was the expectation, rather than holding onto the hard theological position against abortion. A woman's right to choose versus abortion was something that caused a great deal of reflection to take place. My theology was challenged and I was forced to examine the

parallels going on in my life. Thinking about what it meant to be in the “perfect” or “permissive” will of God in relationship to abortion and the calling became the focus of the experience. Further, I had to accept the reality of the loss of life in not only abortion, but by way of those who could lose their life eternally by my failure to accept the call. I experientially discovered the cost of being and acting outside of the will of God. It became a painful process of realization that I had not been true to the Divine calling. My theological understanding of obedience to God did not match the practice. It was through my friend’s difficult situation and decision that I finally decided to accept the call to preach the gospel at the age of twenty-four.

Upon my acceptance of the call, I remember reading in *“The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry”* where author H. Richard Niebuhr states, “Entering the ministry [is] more like entering the army, where one never knows where [one] will land or live or what specific work [one] will be called upon to perform.”³ Thus, one needs to be sure of four essential elements of the nature of the call:

The call to be a Christian,the secret call, namely, that inner persuasion whereby a person feels himself directly summoned or invited by God to take up the work of ministry. The providential call, ...the equipment of a person with the talents necessary for the exercise of the office and through the Divine guidance of [one’s] life... [and] the ecclesiastical call, the summons or invitation extended to [one] by...the church.⁴

All of the above elements had been experienced in the call and I was about to enter the ministry to face the challenges of this new “enlistment.”

The initial sermon was preached at the Mount Sinai Baptist Church in July 1984. For the next several years, I preached, led worship, and taught classes at every

³ Richard H. Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry* (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1956).

⁴ Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church*, 64.

opportunity. Although not required to attend seminary, I felt the urge to go and follow the “urges of God” placed in my life. Thus, I enrolled as a full-time student at Wesley Theological Seminary. At Wesley, I was challenged, stretched, and deepened in my theological understanding. Some of the longstanding questions were answered and replaced with new questions. Although initially not fully prepared for the academic rigor, it was the right place to be in preparation for my future ministry. In three years, I graduated with the Master of Divinity degree. While in seminary, internships in ministry were conducted at the Greater First Baptist Church and First Baptist Church in Washington where Reverend Frank D. Tucker became my mentor. This was after taking a course with Reverend Tucker through the Washington Theological Consortium at Howard School of Divinity.

It was at First Baptist that the pastoral identity was discovered and I learned how to lead in various ways. Initially, I led worship, taught Bible classes, led the youth ministry, and regularly preached, especially at the 6:00 pm worship service. The experience at First Baptist was most beneficial because of the intentional mentoring to become a pastor. Pastor Tucker was liberal with his time, instruction, and “testing” by giving opportunities to learn through demonstration of the practices of pastoral ministry. Later in my tenure, I served as the assistant pastor, where pastoral duties were administered under the tutelage of my mentor. Reverend Tucker was most instrumental in developing skills in visioning and creating new ministries, administration, and budgeting.

Later, I was hired as a site coordinator by the Church Association for Community Services, an ecumenical association of 116 churches which provided a number of social services and was a ministry envisioned and developed by Reverend Tucker. I was

afforded the opportunity to see the envisioning and development of this ministry while at the same time becoming a leader in the ministry. The desire to continue in ministry in the area of administration was developing and the opportunity was offered to become the Director of Admissions at Wesley Theological Seminary, my alma mater.

There had been no notion to return to Wesley in any capacity, but I returned as an administrative staff member. Life had come full circle. I was back at the place that had academically prepared me for ministry. Over the course of eight years, I set out to accomplish a personal goal of attracting more racial ethnic minorities to Wesley, which was a predominately white institution. During my tenure, I was able to double the student enrollment, triple the racial ethnic student population, and with help from others, encourage the institution to offer more evening courses. I participated in the sacramental worship life and community life of the seminary. The work at Wesley was more than advertising, reporting, and recruiting, admitting, and orientating students. The ministry for me became helping students, faculty, and administration to widen their actual horizons to greater diversity, which was a part of its mission statement. After six years at Wesley and years of guest preaching, I was feeling the urge to finally enter pastoral ministry in the local church. A District Superintendent hire provided the opportunity to serve as the part-time pastor of Carter's United Methodist Church in Friendship, MD, while continuing ministry at Wesley.

Carter's United Methodist Church was a small, rural, African American family church, which had been on a two-point charge and was now going to be a station church (meaning a standalone church separated from the other church in the charge with its own pastor). As pastor, I was excited about the opportunity to exercise the gifts of ministry in

the local church as lead pastor. Over the course of two years, membership increased, as did worship attendance and the church's budget. In addition, the basement of the church's fellowship hall was completed, which provided space for a pastor's office and computer lab. I learned the great joy and responsibility of shepherding and loving God's people and receiving love from God's people. After the two years, it was clear that I was called to full-time service in the local church.

Therefore, a full-time appointment was offered at McKendree-Simms-Brookland United Methodist in Washington, DC. This church was a midsize urban congregation with an aging membership located in a densely stable community. This church and its location and ethos were very familiar. Again, life had come full circle. This church was familiar in that I had rehearsed there as a teen when singing with the DC chapter of the James Cleveland's Gospel Music Workshop choir. It was the same church at which I rededicated my life to Christ.

Over the years, there had been a slow decline in membership, church attendance, new ministry development, and financial growth. Initially, I was excited about the new appointment, although the church was in early stages of decline and had a reputation as a congregation that resisted pastoral leadership. The personal challenge was attempting to help the congregation capture a new vision and redefine itself. My spiritual pilgrimage at this congregation was to lead it forward into the future, despite its resistance. This helped me to further develop in my spirituality by staying more prayerful, thoughtfully reflecting, carefully moving, and trusting God more faithfully and fully. There have been many dark nights of questioning the call to this church, yet the affirmation has been given

by God over and over again. It has been a time of learning patience and waiting for “*kairos*” time— the appointed time in the purpose of God for this church.

After eleven years, I was appointed to serve as the United Methodist Wesley Foundation Campus Minister at Howard University. I worked with the Dean of the Howard University Andrew Rankin Memorial Chapel to provide a number of religious services to students for three years, which afforded the opportunity to help students with discernment, spiritual practices, and practical matters while providing mentoring to a number of students. Although a fulfilling experience, on July 1, 2014, I was appointed to the Colesville United Methodist Church as lead pastor.

Historically, Colesville celebrated its centennial anniversary in 1966, which in 2016 marks 150 years of its existence. One of the celebratory events was the publication of a book by Eveleen Hobbs Carter, the church’s historian, entitled “*Centennial*.” Henry Baggerly started the church, and he was raised and lived as a Roman Catholic.⁵ However, in 1773, Henry heard the preaching of a Methodist pioneer, Robert Strawbridge, and renounced the Catholic faith and became a committed Methodist. In 1774, he established a church or a “meeting house” and opened it to circuit riders or Methodist preachers.⁶ In 1804, Henry bought a small parcel of land on what is known today as New Hampshire Avenue, and the members built a Methodist church named Federal Chapel. The deed to the property is possessed by the Colesville Methodist Church and is on display at the church in the Heritage Center.⁷ Federal Chapel was destroyed and another site, Andrew

⁵ Bill Turque, “Affluent Montgomery County has Pockets of Poverty, Mostly in the East,” *Washington Post*, September 6, 2014.

⁶ Turque, “Affluent Montgomery County,” *Washington Post*, September 6, 2014.

⁷ Turque, “Affluent Montgomery County,” *Washington Post*, September 6, 2014.

Chapel, was erected in 1868. In 1938, Andrew Chapel II was erected within the same community. In 1958, Paul Groseclose led the congregation in a building campaign to construct a new church, and Colesville Methodist Church was established. “In April 1968, the Evangelical United Brethren Church merged with the Methodist Church to form the United Methodist Church and thus we became Colesville United Methodist Church.”⁸ Reverend Vincent Liburd was appointed as pastor in 1983 as the first black pastor from the Island of St. Kitts in the southern Caribbean. Over the history of Colesville, there were a variety of pastors who have served both male and female, black and white.

In 2014, I was appointed as pastor of Colesville United Methodist Church. The church statistics are approximately 400 members with approximately 285 members of African American descent. Approximately 104 members are White and the balance of the members is of Asian, Hispanic, Latino, or Multi-Racial descent. The largest gender of the population is female, with approximately 63%, and the male population constitutes the remaining 37%. Approximately 40% of the membership participates in service over the weekend.

The initial year at Colesville consisted of learning the congregation, established processes, vision, history, and culture of the church. Traditional staple activities were established or enriched including Bible study, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, leadership exercises, outreach ministries, interactions with the youth, and community engagement. In evaluating my overall ministerial experience it is clear that each experience had a tremendous impact on my development and understanding of stewardship. As a member of Mount Sinai Baptist Church, I learned the importance of

⁸ Turque, “Affluent Montgomery County,” *Washington Post*, September 6, 2014.

tithing as a spiritual discipline. Members were taught, encouraged and had modeled tithing as the primary vehicle of financial support for the mission and ministry of the church. It was at this church that I learned as challenging as a discipline it was, it paid spiritual “dividends” beyond anything I could imagine. The sacrificial nature of giving leads me to grow in faith.

While at First Baptist Church under the leadership of Reverend Frank Tucker, he taught me the importance of discerning a God-given vision for a congregation, developing a budget for funding that vision and how to present the opportunity to the congregation on how to be faithful in stewardship (with time, talent and financial resources) to help fulfill the vision. Reverend Tucker was careful in detailing a way for all to be able to participate in fulfilling the budget and yet, challenge those who were more financially able to give sacrificially. I witnessed a major church renovation project that was necessary to be fulfilled by the members participating with their valuable input, stewardship and sacrifices to make the renovations a reality.

At Carter's United Methodist Church, when I was given the budget it's heading read "Faith Budget," I asked someone to explain the title although I knew what both "faith" and a "budget" meant. It was explained to me the budget was more than the church had realized financially in any previous budget and this budget would be a "stretch" to accomplish. When I was appointed in July, the year's budget projections were not being realized and the church was unclear as to whether or not they could "make up" the budget deficit. I quickly began a stewardship emphasis to encourage the members to tithe, and if they could not tithe, to encourage people to give regularly and proportionately. It challenged me to focus on stewardship as a way of life in this

congregation and to talk about giving as a means to fulfilling the church's mission and ministry. It was amazing to watch the congregation met and succeed its budget in that first year and to watch them establish an even larger budget the next year.

When I was appointed to McKendree Simms Brookland United Church (SBUMC), the church had a healthy budget that met the needs of its mission and ministry. However, over the next few years, it was observed that through attrition and "fixed incomes" of an aging congregation the giving became stagnate, but stable. Although there were a number of deaths from substantial givers in the church and only a small number of new members being added to the church, it was observed the giving remained stable, because it appeared the congregation increased its giving to maintain the established missions and ministries of the church. However, the increased utilities, other associated ministry costs, overdue deferred maintenance on the church and its investment properties, the lost of rental income from inhabitable investment properties, began to cause a financial strain on the church's finances. This was the impetus to begin this investigation on how to do better financial stewardship in the church. This developing church financial crisis along with other concerns of how does and should the church develop faithful stewardship as a lifestyle began the inquiry for this study.

In addition to the opportunities for ministry, there was a burden to lead the congregation into gaining a better understanding of the importance and impact of "generous giving." As pastor of Colesville United Methodist Church, I wanted to help the congregation gain a greater understanding of stewardship in its totality. Therefore, processes were put into place to identify an accountant who could effectively manage the finances of the church. A new stewardship giving and spending report was established to

keep everyone informed of the financial status of the church. A new stewardship committee was implemented which consisted of a twelve-month plan for stewardship. Finally, there was a plan established to lead the church to begin an initial investment with the United Methodist Mid-Atlantic Foundation. It is my belief that if Colesville becomes a stronger congregation that understands and embraces “generous giving,” the church will be in a better position to be more effective in the community as well as the region.

With this belief in mind, specific goals were established for fiscal year 2016, which focused on implementing a generous giving campaign. The goal of the campaign was to increase giving of tithes and offerings by 3% within a year. The goal was to be accomplished by the process of identifying and appointing a stewardship chair or team to start a well-timed campaign. The campaign would include conducting budget workshops and providing correspondences and communication with the members to encourage and promote improved giving. The goal of the generous giving campaign will benefit all of the other goals that are set for fiscal year 2016 by growing and enhancing relationships within the congregation. Community events and church operations will be enhanced because the church will be more financially stable, which will provide greater resources that can be used within the community as well as the church.

By implementing the generous giving campaign, the community will be well-served when considering the pockets of poverty that exist within Montgomery County, the county wherein Colesville United Methodist Church resides. The poverty exists despite the existence of prosperous neighborhoods like White Oak, Hillandale, and Burtonville. In some parts of these neighborhoods unemployment is at 20%, which is

about five times the county average.⁹ The living wage for a family of four is approximately \$49,979 a year, which is more than double the federal poverty threshold, according to a calculator developed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology.¹⁰ Further, according to a study conducted in 2010 by Impact Silver Spring, “almost half of the residents who live in apartments in Briggs Chaney spend 35 percent or more of their income on rent – exceeding the 30 percent generally regarded as the upper limit for housing costs.”¹¹ Overall, the countywide poverty rate is 6.5%, and between 2007 and 2010 the county lost 37,000 jobs. Further, Elizabeth Kneebone’s study with the Brookings Institution indicates that, “nationwide, the poor population rose from 33.9 million to 46.2 million between 2000 and 2010. While the highest poverty rates are still in cities, the number of suburban poor grew by 53 percent — more than twice the rate of urban growth.”¹²

Considering these startling statistics of poverty in Montgomery County, the goals of the church to be dedicated to providing adequate outreach within the community, the command of Jesus, “go ye therefore,” and the desire to be obedient of the lead pastor, establishing an increased giving model will serve all of the entities well. The community will benefit from the inpouring by the church; the church will benefit from its obedience to go and make disciples, and often times before compelling men and women who often must be met in their place of need before being compelled to come to church. I will be

⁹ Turque, “Affluent Montgomery County,” *Washington Post*, September 6, 2014.

¹⁰ Amy K. Glasmeier, “Living Wage Calculator for Montgomery County, Maryland,” *Living Wage Calculator*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, accessed February 2, 2016, <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/24031>.

¹¹ Turque, “Affluent Montgomery County,” *Washington Post*, September 6, 2014.

¹² Elizabeth Kneebone and Alan Berube, *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America* (Washington, DC: Brookings Press, 2013).

successful in following the burden that has been placed on my heart by obedience, outreach, and growing a congregation to give out of their abundance, generously.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to gain an understanding of the concept of human generosity in the Old and New Testaments Books of the Bible. This chapter will explore an Old and New Testaments passage by using a textual and contextual hermeneutical methodology. The Old Testament passage is Exodus 36:2-7, a passage which describes Israel's giving in over-abundance of material donations for the building of the tent of meeting. The Israelites gave in such abundance that Moses asks them to stop giving, because their extravagant generosity has provided more than enough materials for the necessary work of building the tabernacle.

The New Testament passage is 2 Corinthians 8:1-12, which describes the generous offering that had been requested by Paul and given by the Macedonian Christians to the Jerusalem temple, which was described to be beyond their means. This offering was a gift from a struggling church. The large and cheerful offering was found to be an act of extreme or extravagant generosity. The two texts selected in this paper are Exodus 36:2-7 and 2 Corinthians 8:1-12, and they have been selected because they express the generosity of the people of God in the Old and New Testament, and their witness toward God and the work of God, and because a similar generosity has been historically reflected in the African American church. The strategy for using these texts is not to coerce or manipulate or to "nickel and dime" in order to get enough money. If it is

established that life itself is a pure gift, then generosity and gratitude flow easily and readily. In this research, generosity is defined as an act of kindness given as a gift to someone or some cause in the form of time, talent, treasure and financial resources. It is a gift that is usually more than what can reasonably be expected and more than sufficient for its intended purpose. Generosity shows a nobility of character in that it is usually not expected, and if it is expected, it is usually given in an unusual, extraordinary size, quality or quantity relative to what one might reasonably expect. Generosity in its purist form is done willingly and freely, and normally with no expectation of any tangible reciprocation. Generosity is most often associated with charity in general. Generosity is counter to the notions of miserly and stinginess.

In Frederick C. Tiffany and Sharon Ringe's book entitled *Biblical Interpretation: A Roadmap*, they state, "The journey of biblical interpretation begins at home, with attention to the immediate contemporary environment in which the biblical text is encountered."¹ Melvin Amerson, in his book *Stewardship in African-American Churches*, maintains that, "The African-American church has a strong history and tradition of faithful Christian stewardship. Its history and early tradition offer incredible examples of faith in the midst of difficult and harsh situations."²

In examining the Old Testament scripture of Exodus 36:2-7, it states,

Then Moses called Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, everyone whose heart was stirred, to come and do the work. And they received from Moses all the offering which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of making the sanctuary. So they

¹ Frederick C. Tiffany and Sharon H. Ringe, *Biblical Interpretations: A Roadmap* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 25.

² Melvin Amerson, *Stewardship in African-American Churches: A New Paradigm* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2006), 11.

continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning. Then all the craftsmen who were doing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work he was doing, and they spoke to Moses, saying, “The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the Lord commanded *us* to do.” So Moses gave a commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, “Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary.” And the people were restrained from bringing, for the material they had was sufficient for all the work to be done—indeed too much.³

The Book of Exodus is largely the story of Israel’s liberation from Egyptian bondage by God through God’s appointed leader Moses and the establishment of God’s law (known as the Mosaic Law) and covenant with Israel. When evaluating the Old Testament Book of Exodus, it is also important to view it from the lens of social vision from the Hebrew context. It is clear that the Exodus story is a reflection of liberation and deliverance for Israel.⁴ However, the Exodus story is also a reflection of poverty and injustice.⁵

Exodus is the mythic recasting of Israel’s national resistance to foreign domination. Exodus is replete with the political aims of the dominant class, not society’s lowest echelons. In its various layers, the text represents the self-assertion of ancient Israel’s priestly, monarchic, and tribal hopefuls. It undergirds the quest for national survival that plagued Israel for centuries. Exodus does not in the end encourage internal social revolution of the sort envisioned by liberation writers.⁶

Further, it is argued that the Palestine perspectives highlights the major hermeneutical problem of “Exodus as a political liberation construct must squarely face if one wishes to build a truly liberating theological methodology that avoids the pitfalls of the

³ Biblical citations within this document are from the New Revised Standard Version unless stated otherwise, Exodus 36:2-7.

⁴ J. David Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 174.

⁵ Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible*, 174.

⁶ Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible*, 174.

oversimplification of the use of scripture in the contemporary context.”⁷ Due to the terminology and attention given to the poor, disenfranchised members in ancient Israel a framework of theological and historical motivation was established toward the poor, which resulted in an explicit “theology of obligation.”⁸ “The prohibition against abusing the widow, orphan and neighbor is joined with the notice that should these people be mistreated and they cry out to God, their cry will not go unheeded.”⁹

The book has four primary sections including: liberation of Israel, establishment of Godly examples of faith in the midst of the development of the “tent of meetings.” The liberation component consisted of the Nation of Israel being liberated from Egyptian bondage. Israel had been enslaved for approximately 400 years in Egypt and Exodus gives a historical account of their freedom from Pharaoh. The historical account is provided in chapters one through eighteen. The second section focuses on the establishment of God’s law with Moses at a meeting with God on Mount Sinai. The overall purpose of God providing Moses with the law was to serve as a set of guidelines to govern the newly liberated people, which is captured in chapters nineteen and twenty. It is in chapters twenty through twenty-four that the law was “the making of a [new] covenant, a binding relation whereby Yahweh [as God is known] and Israel are intimately, profoundly, and non-negotiably committed to each other.”¹⁰

⁷ Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible*, 168.

⁸ Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible*, 52.

⁹ Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible*, 52.

¹⁰ Leander Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994), 678-679.

The final section focuses on a God-commanded place (called the "tent of meeting") where God's presence could continue to be experienced and institutionalized, which is highlighted in chapters twenty-five through forty.¹¹

Although Moses has been solely identified as the author of Exodus as well as the other writings in the Pentateuch, it has been argued that the historical Moses could not have been the author of a single book of the Pentateuch.¹² Therefore, authorship was credited to a nameless writer. Many believed that Moses could not have been the author because of the condition of the world at that period, the supposition that the alphabetic writing was not invented during the time of Moses, and "if the Egyptian hieroglyphic systems was anterior to Moses, it cannot have been employed to embody with any definiteness this articulate sounds of the Hebrew language."¹³ Further, many claim that literature was in its infancy during the time of Moses. The objection of Moses as author is counter argued based on the fact that alphabetical writing was a much earlier discovery than supposed and it was widely spread over the world. Moreover, inscriptions on bricks and gems date to B.C. 2000, and words expressive of "writing, book and ink were common to all brands and dialects with the exceptions of the Ethiopic and Southern Arabian."¹⁴ Lastly, the final defense of identifying or labeling Moses as the author is that the Holy Spirit guided him. According to G. L. Archer, he writes:

While materials which the author used for the composition of this book no doubt came to him from five to six centuries before his time, prior to Jacob's migration

¹¹ Leander Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 678-679.

¹² H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, in the introduction of "Exodus," *The Pulpit Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1961), viii.

¹³ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, viii.

¹⁴ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, viii.

into Egypt, nevertheless Moses seems to have served as a Spirit-guided compiler and interpreter of the pre-existent material which had come to him from his forebears in oral and written form.¹⁵

In addition to the Holy Spirit as a guide, it is important to note that Moses was raised in the house of Pharaoh, which means he was the recipient of a quality education that was at the highest standard within Egypt. *The Nelson Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts* further cements this argument by stating, that Moses was providentially prepared to understand and integrate, under the inspiration of God all of the available records, manuscripts and oral narratives.¹⁶

Another suggestion on authorship is that Moses retained control of the writings, but used others to write sections of the document. Additionally, E.J. Young proposes that there may have been minor inspired additions or revisions after Moses' time, but Young continues to indicate that the work belongs to Moses. "Under divine inspiration there may have been later minor additions and even revisions. Substantially and essentially, however, it is the product of Moses."¹⁷

To fully appreciate the passages of Exodus in chapters 35-36, they must be understood in relationship to Israel's liberation and covenant. Firstly, Israel was indebted to God for their liberation from slavery in Egypt. God called, anointed and appointed Moses who was a reluctant leader to go to the Egyptian Pharaoh and gain the release of God's people in the land to which they had been taken as slaves. It is clear that Moses was the human leader used by God to secure their release, but also, that it was secured by

¹⁵ G. L. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1998), 223.

¹⁶ Ronald F. Youngblood, *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary: New and Enhanced Edition* (Nashville, TN: HarperCollins Publishers, 1986), 435.

¹⁷ E. J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (London, UK: The Tyndale Press, 1953), 51.

God's divine intervention through various supernatural plagues and God's miracle movement of the waters at the Red (or Reed) Sea so that Israel could walk over on dry land while their enemy was drowned by the same waters (Exodus chapters 8-14). Moses was the human instrument used, but God was active in human history to secure Israel's release. In addition, God provided Divine guidance for Israel in their wilderness as well as provided both protection and provisions for their survival. Moses was the visible lead actor, but God was the invisible, "behind the scenes" director and orchestrator of this Divine liberation drama. Israel was free, because of God and indebted to God.¹⁸

Further, Israel had re-established covenantal relations with God through Moses. From the beginning of time, God had established covenants with humanity through their given leaders from Adam to Abram and now in Exodus with Moses. God made covenant promises to be faithful to humanity and only expected humanity to be faithful to God. God's covenants were issued with Divine promises, if only humanity would be obedient to God. However, humanity was constantly breaking covenant by being disobedient to God. God spoke clearly of God's Divine will through various commands, yet Israel often decided to follow their own disobedient, self destructive, willful ways. Although God allowed various calamities to come Israel's way, God did not stop loving Israel, nor did God destroy them for their disobedience. In fact, when the people of God repented of their disobedience, God would forgive them and re-establish covenant.

Israel was indebted to God for God's forgiveness, love and willingness to re-establish covenant with them.¹⁹ "In the last chapters of the book of Exodus, the [biblical]

¹⁸ Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 678-679.

¹⁹ Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 678-679.

text is preoccupied with the problem and possibility of hosting the “Holy.” The plan of providing a viable home for the “Holy” is God’s own plan given to Moses on Mt Sinai. The actual construction of the vehicle for presence, however, is human work, to be done on earth, after Moses descends from the mountain.²⁰ The project of producing a place where the presence of God can be experienced is both Divine and human. God is the Divine owner, originator and designer of the project; Moses is the general contractor responsible for gathering the material and human resources while overseeing the daily operations. The Israelites are the donors of the resources and workers on the project. All who were involved in this Divine project were playing their respective roles so that God and Israel would have a place -- although transitory in nature -- to meet and be in relationship. It was designed as a place where the people could experience God and offer worthy animal sacrifices to God. These animal sacrifices in the Old Testament where the animal had to be pure were an offering given to God by Israel and used as a sign of the Israelites’ faithfulness by sacrificially giving a gift to God in gratitude for God’s gracious act towards them. It was to be a place of ritual for Israel to worship God, to whom they were not only indebted, but who was simply worthy because of God’s gracious character. Yet, this place did not exist and had to be built.

Exodus 35:1 opens with Moses assembling the whole of Israel to "gather." One biblical translation uses the word "community" (NIV) and another uses "congregation" (NRSV). Both words seem to get at the notion that all Israel was summoned to come. The word community is an all inclusive term to include all who belong to a certain prescribed demographic, which may be too broad a term here without certain modifiers.

²⁰ Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible*, 678-679.

The word "congregation" means the faithful gathered community; however, in its modern usage congregation may not be the best word since it can refer to a local church, which is too narrow and parochial for what is intended here. While one rendering of this could be "Moses called the assembly of Israel together," the assembly referred to is the assembly of those who are faithful to God. This call for the whole faithful Israelite community to come was because Moses, God's servant and their leader, had a command from the Lord to issue such a call.

The role of Moses in the text was to speak the command of God to Israel, enlist their help and resources in fulfilling the command of God and lead the people into fulfilling the command. The command of God was issued first to Moses on Mt. Sinai and is now being conveyed to Israel through Moses. In implementing the plan and evaluating its success, the servant leader, Moses, must be examined. As the leader, Moses understood and eventually embraced his role. Upon getting past the personal challenges of stuttering and doubt, Moses became effective in the role. God empowered Moses to lead the Israelites because Moses could be trusted for the assigned task. In evaluating the success of the project, it is imperative to identify the appropriate leader. In order to be able to effectively speak the commands of God, Moses needed a personal relationship with God and a willingness to embrace the call upon his life to lead the Children of Israel. Some of the leadership traits displayed by Moses included obedience to God, the ability to listen and the ability to follow the will of God. We witness the obedience to God as Moses gathered the people together.

Out of obedience, Moses begins to give instruction to the people according to what had been provided to him by God. Moses gives instructions regarding the Sabbath.

He gives instructions regarding the number of days that they would work. Moses provides instructions regarding the challenges that the people would face if they were not obedient to the commands that were given, “Whoever works on it shall be put to death,” (35:2). The instructions were specific in that the people were instructed not to light a fire. The text is worded as such because the Jewish tradition permitted a fire on the Sabbath if it was kindled just before the Sabbath and not refueled.²¹

Moses’ ability to listen is portrayed by providing commandments of God to Israel because he was attentively listening to God as the commandments were given. By giving Israel the commandments, it is a demonstration that Moses was following the will of God and had placed his ideals on the back burner. As a result of an effective leader, the community operated in a sphere of liberal giving. According to the *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*,

One powerful element doubtless of this extraordinary open-hearted liberality was the remembrance of their recent transgression, which made them “zealous of good works.” But along with this motive, there were others of a higher and nobler kind—a principle of love to God and devotedness to His service, an anxious desire to secure the benefit of His presence, and gratitude for the tokens of His divine favor: it was under the combined influence of these considerations that the people were so willing and ready to pour their contributions into that exchequer of the sanctuary.²²

The people gave from a place of appreciation and love for the devotedness that God had shown them. They were appreciative of the Divine favor of God and desired to have a place where His presence could dwell. A rhetorical suggestion was that the offering and

²¹ N. D. Osborn, and H. A. Hatton, *A Handbook on Exodus* (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1999), 823.

²² R. Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and D. Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 71.

its intent were utterly comprehensive. On the one hand, the word is used to describe the participation of “all” the people. The contributors include men and women, leaders and people, and each gives at the point of personal strength, those who have goods and those who have skill. On the other hand, “all” is used for the totality of materials and the totality of the work to be done. The term “all” used yields a picture of a community, everyone alive, stirred, and energized to act well outside itself and well beyond any conventional practice. This is indeed once-in-a-lifetime effort for a once-for-all-time ecclesiastical and theological purpose. Based on the above analysis, there were four points to account for such uncalculating generosity, which lend themselves for teaching and preaching this text and understanding its meaning and application.

Firstly, there was the promise and expectation that the offering would provide a tabernacle in which the very presence of God would dwell, which is a sufficient reasoning for generosity. As a sequel to chapter thirty-two, Israel has now come face to face with God’s incredible graciousness and willingness to begin again with this “stiff-necked people.” Secondly, this offering poignantly contrasts the disastrous offering brought to Aaron we saw in chapter thirty-two (vv. 2-3). In this gesture, Israel has a chance to redress that earlier terrible deed of disobedience. Thirdly, in reading the book of Exodus and the journey from liberation to presence, this offering is a response to the wonder of liberation. The people who in their destitute condition had to seize silver and gold from the Egyptians (cf. 3:21-22; 11:2-3; 12:35-36) are now able to give from their abundance. This newly liberated Israel, unlike the desperate slave community, knows that it is much better to give than to receive. Fourthly, the opportunity to construct a home for the “holy” means that Israel has a chance to put behind the terrible season of

absence called “exile.” In the post-exilic period, Israel is indeed beginning again, after “the absence,” with the glorious God who has now promised to be present. Thus, Israel’s new beginning is an act of profound generosity by the God who has been so generous in liberation, in covenant making and in forgiveness. Both parties, God and Israel, practice uncommon generosity.

God specifies Bezalel and Oholiab as the key workmen. Yahweh is the subject of the section, while Bezalel and Oholiab are objects and recipients of Yahweh’s actions. Yahweh called, authorized, equipped, and inspired. Four words were used to demonstrate competence: spirit, skill, intelligence, and knowledge. And thus, these workpeople were equipped to teach others. Moses plays a subordinate role. These are competent laypersons, authorized directly by Yahweh. Their commitment and skill correspond in personnel to the generosity of the money. They were uncommonly skilled, and they were keenly motivated. Both their skill and their motivation were the work and gift of Yahweh.

As superintendents of the project, Bezalel and Oholiab were filled with the Spirit of God.

This filling manifested itself in their skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts. What is more, these two master craftsmen both possessed the ability to teach others these skills. God had blessed a whole troop of laborers with the skills necessary to construct the Tabernacle as he had commanded (35:30–36:1).²³

It is clear that the two superintendents were chosen by God, filled with the Holy Spirit, equipped to do the work and capable of training others to work as well. In essence, due to the Holy Spirit, they were capable of fulfilling the assigned task. Further, the “*Bible Reader’s Commentary*” indicates,

²³ J. E. Smith, *The Pentateuch* (Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co., 1993).

The Holy Spirit is not an “influence,” but a Person. Christ used the personal pronoun “He” in speaking of the Spirit (John 14:17, 26; 16:13–15). The Bible says that the Spirit knows and understands (Rom. 8:27; 1 Cor. 2:11), acts and chooses (12:11), loves (Rom. 15:30), teaches (John 14:26), intercedes (Rom. 8:26), convicts (John 16:7–8), bears witness (15:26), and guides (16:13). These are acts of a Person, not an impersonal influence.²⁴

Finally, the “*New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*,” concurs with the sentiments of the guiding of the Holy Spirit by stating that the obedience of Bezalel and Oholiab and their special knowledge and skill ensured that the work was accomplished. Further, the two leaders were gifted as “craftsmen, but they also had the aptitude to teach others,” (35:34).²⁵

As a result of the presence of the Holy Spirit, we evaluate the giving of the people from a different lens. Giving is not only from the aspect of being asked to give, but also from the lens of giving under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Verses (35:30-35) of the text developed two themes concerning material offering symmetrically: command and response. Beyond command and response, there is now a third, very odd element concerning the offering: the artisans are overwhelmed by too much material! This is generosity run rampant. The workmen report to Moses an overwhelming supply of foods, and Moses must order a cessation of offerings.

Three rhetorical elements express the intensity of the offerings. First, the Israelites bring offerings “morning by morning.” Second, twice the proverbial expressions: “still kept” and “anything else,” suggesting repeated, reiterated action. Third, twice the interesting expression about the super-abundance: “much more than

²⁴ L. O. Richards, *The Bible Reader's Companion* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1991), 73.

²⁵ D. A. Carson, et al., *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Ed* (Leicester, UK; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 118–119.

enough” and “more than enough.” In Exodus 36:7 the term is matched with so that the Hebrew construction is “enough and some left over.” The term in Hebrew used regularly means “sufficient, all that is needed,” and suggests, “overflowing blessing.” We are not told why there was such an overflow of commitment and generosity on the part of Israel. Clearly this is an extraordinary moment in Israel’s liturgical life, in which generosity toward God and God’s promised presence is unprecedented. The only explicit comment in the text concerning motivation is that the people have “generous hearts and willing spirits.”

This remarkable act of stewardship is a dramatic assertion against every notion of self-sufficiency. The psychology and economics of autonomy, of being “self-made,” are enormously powerful among us and constitute the fundamental ideology of modern consumerism. That psychology teaches that humans are isolated individuals capable of self-sufficiency. The result of such ideology is a grudging, thin capacity for giving, sharing, or making sacrifices.

In evaluating the culture, Israel was in a festive mood. They were festive because God had forgiven, restored health, vitality and energy. As a result of the festive mood and the forgiveness of God, the people were invited to bring gifts and assist with the development of the tabernacle. Moses pointed out that,

The object was one for the glory of God and the edification of his people – no less an object than the substitution for the poor “tent of meeting,” which he had extemporized on the morrow of his first descent from Sinai of a glorious structure, of the richest materials, designed by God himself, worthy of him, and suited to intensify and spiritualise the devotions of all worshippers. It was fit that the structure should if possible, be raised by means of the free gifts to the faithful.²⁶

²⁶ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, viii.

In evaluating the actions of the people, almost everything needed for the tabernacle was provided by gifts from the people. The actual implementation was orderly and intentional. The community was so convinced of its covenantal affirmations and so taken up in its conviction of the truth of its liberation narrative that it acted completely beyond the usual calculations of prudence and caution. It began with the mustering of adequate materials and personnel. The offering for the necessary materials was narrated in three sections: the command (vv. 4-9), the offering itself (vv. 20-29), and the cessation of the offering (36:3-7). The counter theme of personnel is given in two parts, as recruitment and response (35:30-36:2). This community was preoccupied with Sabbath as the quintessential mark of obedience, for in Sabbath, life was willingly handed back to Yahweh in grateful rest. Moses' first act after coming down from the mountain was to authorize an offering, to gather materials for the tabernacle. The tabernacle was to be made out of the best that Israel could provide. The offering was to be brought by those of "generous heart."

The giving of the people were tremendous to say the least, in looking at the amount given in silver and gold, the amount was approximately, £207,039, which equates to approximately \$291,599 USD in today's currency.²⁷ This amount is reflective only of the silver and gold amounts, and is not all-inclusive of the giving.

The liberal giving is an indication that God will be adequately housed only when the people give generously and abundantly. It is also worthy to note that the building of the tabernacle occurred in a very short time frame, approximately six months, as a result

²⁷ A. Edersheim, *Bible History: Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975), 135.

of the liberal giving of the people.²⁸ Moses assembled competent personnel to do the required work. It was clear that behind the financial transaction of the offering, which is a considerable matter in and of itself, was a deeply felt religious motivation. Thus the paragraph is saturated with phrases of religious motivation: “heart stirred”, i.e., lifted; “spirit willing”; “willing heart”; “hearts moved”; “lifted;” “hearts willing.” There was a level of volunteerism that far surpassed the general application. Additionally, the liberal giving of the people must not be overlooked. The liberality was not limited but expanded to the men and women. There was a willingness to give and giving was not predicated on their ability or possessions. A wide variety of gifts were brought for the building of the tabernacle including: fine linens, goatskins, silver, brass, wood, yarn, precious stones, gold and jewelry. As a result, the gifts far exceeded the needs for the tabernacle and an overflow existed for God’s house. The overflow from the people was so tremendous that they had to be restrained from bringing gifts for the tabernacle. Ultimately, the underlying message is that the work of the Lord “Should be supported by the voluntary contributions of the people.”²⁹ The secondary lesson being displayed is that the people made giving to God an act of worship.³⁰

Israel’s gift to God was considered an act of worship because the gifts were given as an offering and as a willingness to work, which is a reflection of religious giving at its best. Realistically, the type of liberal giving displayed by Israel is the desired gift from God. God desires for His people to give freely, to give as an act of worship, to give out of

²⁸ A. Edersheim, *Bible History: Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975), 135.

²⁹ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 380.

³⁰ A. Edersheim, *Bible History*, 135.

appreciation for the forgiveness of sins and to give from the perspective as a worker unto God. “We sometimes dream of what we would give to God if we were wealthy. Moses’ instructions to Israel are a healthy reminder. We can give only from what we have. When we give willingly, we please God and find joy in giving.”³¹ According to R.B. Hughes, “The recounting of the people’s heartfelt offerings overlaps with an account of the skill of the Spirit-filled workmen,” (36:4–6).³²

Another important note is that even though there was abundance for the tabernacle, the leader, Moses, continued to operate with integrity. At no point did they attempt to mismanage the increase that came into the building for the tabernacle. Before the increase was mismanaged, Moses instructed the people to stop bringing resources for the building of the tabernacle. The lesson learned from this biblical paradigm was significant for the Nation of Israel and it is significant for church leaders in the twenty-first century.

Additionally, albeit not a part of the Exodus story, Israel owed a debt to God as Creator. All of humanity owes a debt to God for creating all of creation inclusive of humanity. If it were not for God, humanity and all of creation would not exist. God created all of the creation, created order and created life from nothing “*ex nihilo*.” God then is the originator and owner of all that exists.

The Spirit is identified as God. He is called eternal (Heb. 9:14), the Spirit of the Lord (Isa. 11:2), and the Spirit of God (Gal. 4:6). He is omnipresent (Ps. 139:7), an agent in Creation (Gen. 1:2; Ps. 104:30), and works miracles (Matt. 12:28). The Holy Spirit is the One who brings us new life (John 3:6), and enables us to live a victorious Christian life (Rom. 8:11). The Holy Spirit is also the divine agent of revelation, who “carried along”

³¹ Richards, *The Bible Reader’s Companion*, 73.

³² R. B. Hughes and J. C. Laney, *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001), 41.

the writers of Scripture (2 Peter 1:21).³³

Thus, all matter belongs to God. All of humanity owes God for its very existence. God has given humanity life, substance and resources in life, and in original creation, some authority over parts of the created order. Thus, all that humanity is and possesses belongs to God. God is the owner of all that is and humanity is only the steward (or manager) of God's belongings. God has given humanity responsibility to faithfully and respectfully use that which is needed for sustaining life and manage the excess for God by giving back to God, God's people and God's work in the world. Can Israel (or humanity) ever fully repay God for its indebtedness? The simple answer is a resounding "No." However, Israel (and all of humanity) can be faithful and responsible in its stewardship of God's resources that it possesses.

The people of God in the African American church have historically been very generous in their giving to God by way of their local churches. There was a time in the history of the Black church that African Americans spared no expense to support the local church even if it meant sacrificing resources, which were sorely needed for themselves and their survival. However, this generosity has decreased in all churches. It is acutely felt in the African American church in the contemporary economy. Part of the solution to this almost critical situation in many Black churches is to preach and teach about the generosity found in the Old and New Testament witness of the people of God in hopes of recovering such a practice of faithful generosity. The reason this is so important is that many mainline churches in the North American context (of course, with some notable exceptions) are in decline in membership, worship attendance, and financial

³³ Richards, *The Bible Reader's Companion*, 73.

resources to support their mission and ministry. In fact, Reggie McNeil in *The Present Future* boldly states that,

The current church culture in North America is on life support [and it] is living off the work, money and energy of previous generations from a previous world order. The plug will be pulled either when the money runs out (80 percent of money given to congregations comes from people aged fifty-five and older) or when the remaining three-fourths of a generation who are institutional loyalists die off or both.³⁴

If McNeal's assertion is wholly or partially true, the church in the North American context is in trouble, numerically with membership, spiritually in its lack of worshippers maturing in the faith, and financially with resources for ministry and mission. The purpose of the project is to explore in depth the two texts selected and reflect on the generosity of the biblical witness. The perspective is viewing options that may be discovered through the biblical witness in order to discover how to recover the spirit of generosity in the post modern North American and African-American church. A habitat for God's holiness will never be constructed by self-made persons but only by those who are continually moved by the extraordinary gift of new life.³⁵

New Testament

We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints—and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us, so that we might urge Titus that, as he had already made a beginning, so he should also complete this generous undertaking among you. Now as you excel in everything—in faith,

³⁴ Reggie McNeal, *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 2003), 1.

³⁵ Leander Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994).

in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking. I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. And in this matter I am giving my advice: it is appropriate for you who began last year not only to do something but even to desire to do something—now finish doing it, so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means. For if the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have.

The New Testament scripture 2 Corinthians 8:1-12 provides a continuation from Exodus 36:1-7 on the need to generously give. One of the most difficult issues faced by any pastor, or financially responsible layperson, is the need of money in the church. It is a challenging subject to handle with graciousness, sensitiveness, and dignity. The whole matter of money in the church is beset with perils even in the best of circumstances. These verses will explore the teachings on giving from a holistic perspective. Realistically, the whole chapters of eight and nine provide a thorough overview on the biblical perspective of giving. More specifically, in examining chapters eight and nine, these chapters identify patterns of giving (8:1-9), the purpose of giving (8:10-15), the procedures of giving (8:16-9:5) and the promise of giving (9:6-15).³⁶

The whole of chapter eight is devoted to the collection project, and so is the whole of chap. 9. The appeal itself is most sharply focused in 8:1-15, particularly in 8:7-12. But even here Paul is careful to explain that the appeal (vv. 7, 11-12) is to be regarded as his *counsel*, not as *an order* (8:8-10). Elsewhere in these paragraphs the appeal is only-but nonetheless clearly-implicit, as Paul describes the *earnestness* of the Macedonians (8:1-15).³⁷

³⁶ “Second Corinthians,” Grace to You, accessed February 17, 2016, www.gty.org/resources/bible-introductions/MSB47/second-corinthians.

³⁷ Victor Paul Furnish, *The Anchor Bible: II Corinthians* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984), 409.

The Reader's Companion Bible is in agreement with other scholarly writings, however, this writing indicates that Paul not only provided instructions concerning the collection being taken for Jerusalem Christians, but "he lays out a total philosophy of New Testament giving which replaces the Old Testament principle of the tithe."³⁸

Second Corinthians eight and nine is extremely useful in exploring the economic dimensions in the early Christian movement. Contrary to so many who have assumed in their writings on his theology and ethics that the Apostle Paul does not address issues regarding poverty and wealth in his letters to the churches, thus human generosity, it is contended that this text is evidence which shows Paul's teachings and views on generosity giving and a concern for the poor. New Testament scholar James Dunn's work on *The Theology of Paul, the Apostle* is an excellent example. While he and so many other writers typically include topics on Paul's views on Christology, soteriology, anthropology, ecclesiology, pneumatology, eschatology, law, and other related themes, there is no mention of Paul's care for the poor.³⁹ Usually, if there is a discussion at all in their work, it is about the collection for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem in Romans 15:26; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; and 2 Corinthians 8-9. Chapter eight and nine were used as the basis for the exploration and the notion of human generosity in the New Testament as an example, and one which has hermeneutical value and purpose.

Kar Yong Lim, a New Testament scholar and professor and Director of Postgraduate Studies at Malaysia Theological Seminary, has written a very provocative and helpful article on the subject "Generosity from Pauline Perspective: Insights from

³⁸ Richards, *The Bible Reader's Companion*, 781.

³⁹ James Dunn, *The Theology of Paul, The Apostle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998).

Paul's Letters to the Corinthians.” In that helpful article Lim identifies some key words to include, "Caring for the poor, wealth, poverty, collection, Lord's Supper, Equality." These key words prove helpful in exploring 2 Corinthians 8:1-12 presently.⁴⁰

Apostle Paul is indisputably identified as the author of the New Testament scripture 2 Corinthians. The predicted time of the writings of 2 Corinthians dates range from A.D. 51 to A.D. 56. Scriptures provide validation in 1 Corinthians 16:8 because Paul stayed in Ephesus until the following spring, land marking the Pentecost and 2 Corinthians was written after he left Ephesus.⁴¹ In viewing the Book of 2 Corinthians, chapters one through seven, they were written from the perspective of defending Paul's apostleship. Chapters eight and nine were written from the perspective of exhorting the Corinthians to resume preparations for the collection for the poor at Jerusalem.⁴² Paul confronts the false prophets in chapters ten through thirteen. There are many themes presented in 2 Corinthians such as God being identified as a merciful comforter, Jesus as the One who suffered, God fulfills promises and the One who in His incarnation became poor for believers, just to name a few.⁴³ Although there were tensions between Paul and the Corinthian church, it eventually resulted in Paul sending a "letter of tears" after a tense and conflicting visit to Corinth. Paul opens the Corinthian letter in the eighth

⁴⁰ Kar Yong Lim, "Generosity from Pauline Perspective: Insights from Paul's Letters to the Corinthians," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 37, no.1 (January 2013).

⁴¹ "Second Corinthians," accessed February 17, 2016, www.gty.org/resources/bible-introductions/MSB47/second-corinthians.

⁴² "Second Corinthians," accessed February 17, 2016, www.gty.org/resources/bible-introductions/MSB47/second-corinthians.

⁴³ "Second Corinthians," accessed February 17, 2016, www.gty.org/resources/bible-introductions/MSB47/second-corinthians.

chapter by informing the Corinthians of the liberal giving of the Macedonian churches.

In the Greek phrase,

“En tais ekklesiais,” could also be translated as “among churches or “within the churches.” However, it is sufficient to regard the preposition *en* as standing for the usual dative of Macedonia. Elsewhere Paul refers to “the churches of Galatia” (1 Cor 16:1; Gal 1:2), “of Asia” (1 Cor 16:19), and “of Judea” (Gal 1:22; 1 Thess 2:14). It is immaterial whether Paul is using the name Macedonia with reference to the Roman province or with reference to the original kingdom of Macedonia. In either case he must be thinking of the congregations he had established in Philippi, Thessalonica and (probably) Beroea.⁴⁴

In opening the letter with the customary language, it is reflective of the writing style of Paul where he uses examples to engage or “stir up” the congregants. The example is the generosity of the Macedonian Churches, which was proof of the grace given by the Holy Spirit and a reflection of their character. According to *“The Anchor Bible,”* “God’s grace is associated with Paul’s apostolic labors, and with the gospel generally.”⁴⁵ Grace is also associated with the willingness of the congregation to “contribute to a collection for Christians in Jerusalem.”⁴⁶ As a result of their giving, “their joy overflowed their affliction, and their liberality overflowed their poverty.”⁴⁷ The giving of the Macedonian Churches was comparable to the giving of the widow’s mite, whereas some gave out of abundance, but she gave out of scarcity, “all she had.” Therefore, her small scarce gift was more valuable than the others who gave out of a place of abundance. Paul urges the church at Corinth to follow the example of the Macedonians who, though they were

⁴⁴ Victor Paul Furnish, *The Anchor Bible: II Corinthians* (Garden City, NY: DoubleDay & Company, Inc., 1984), 399-400.

⁴⁵ Furnish, *The Anchor Bible: II Corinthians*, 399.

⁴⁶ Furnish, *The Anchor Bible: II Corinthians*, 399.

⁴⁷ H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, “2 Corinthians,” *The Pulpit Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1961), 195.

extremely poor, did not lessen their generosity and willingness to contribute to the fund for the poor of Jerusalem. The level of poverty was extreme; “Down-to-the depth poverty” is the accurate assessment as provided by Victor Paul Furnish.⁴⁸ Furnish goes on to imply that the wealth of the Macedonians was their wealth to give, in spite of their state of destitution. He further argues that there is a connotation that the simplicity of their desire to give leans towards the true meaning of generosity.⁴⁹

In fact, the Macedonians literally begged Paul to accept the monetary gift despite the fact that they had greater needs for the money. As Lim points out, “This act of generosity was a result of the Macedonians giving ‘themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to Paul,’” as recorded in 2 Corinthians 8:6. This appeal and his urging them to follow the example of Jesus Christ became Paul’s call to the church at Corinth, which is considered the heart of the text in 2 Corinthians 8:9. It is in 2 Corinthians chapters eight and nine that Paul’s understanding of generosity and concern for the poor becomes clearest. At least three practical implications can be drawn from these two chapters, with the major focus on 2 Corinthians 8:1-12 as the primary pericope.

Interestingly, *The Anchor Bible* argues the point that the Macedonians gave of their “own accord” and of their “own free will” and not at the request of Paul. The argument is based on the usage of verbs and adverbs within the verses.

In Greek just one word, *authairetoi*, which GNT-Nestle would associate with what follows in v. 4; thus, e.g., *TEV* and *NIV* begin a new sentence here (*TEV*: “Of their own free will they begged us . . .”). This is possible, but it is better to regard the word, with most recent English versions, as an independent element of the long, admittedly unwieldy sentence which runs from 8:3 through 8:6 (see NOTES below on *they gave*, 8:5, and *As a result*, 8:6). The

⁴⁸ Furnish, *The Anchor Bible: II Corinthians*, 400.

⁴⁹ Furnish, *The Anchor Bible: II Corinthians*, 400.

adjective *authairetos* occurs again in 8:17 (of Titus), but nowhere else in the Greek Bible. (Examples from the papyri in MM s.v.) The adverb, *authairetos*, is used in 2 Mac 6:19; 3 Mac 6:6; 7:10 to mean "voluntarily," and the adjective is used in a similar way. It is unclear how Hering, 59, can say that 8:3-4 "remind us that the collection had been made at Paul's request." The point is, rather, that in the case of the Macedonians a contribution had been made at their own initiative. There is thus no reason, either lexical or contextual, to interpret *authairetoi* here as meaning only "in good heart" (*de bon coeur*) or "without restraint" (*sans contrainte*) as Hering does.⁵⁰

Therefore, one can conclude that the generosity of giving was imbedded within the culture of the Macedonians.

In Paul's theology and particularly his ecclesiology, generosity is grounded in the story of Jesus. In 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, 2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15, and Romans 15:25-32, Paul spends a great deal of time, energy and resources on the monetary collection for the poor believers in Jerusalem that he organized among the Gentile congregation he established. Since there was no sustained organized convention of generosity for the poor in the Hebrew tradition nor the Greco-Roman world, one has to ask where Paul's motivation, understanding of generosity, and rationale for carrying out the Jerusalem collection at such a magnitude came from? In 2 Corinthians 8:9 we get a concrete expression of Paul's understanding of generosity, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich." Jesus himself is the model for generous giving.

Although the giving of Jesus as the central model for Christians to adapt and follow, Paul's concept of giving generously from another set of lens. Some scholars argue that the act of generous giving was rooted in the Paul's heritage as opposed to the Jesus generously giving concept. According to Marty E. Stevens, in *Temple, Tithes, and*

⁵⁰ Furnish, *The Anchor Bible: II Corinthians*, 400-401.

Taxes: The Temple and Economic Life in Ancient Israel, she felt that the temple of ancient Israel was not solely identified as the place of worship, but she also argued that it provided economic support to the community. Further, she argues that there is a demonstration “That the worship of God in ancient Israel was not disconnected from “politics, economics and sociology.””⁵¹ In *Temple, Tithes and Taxes*, Stevens lists five assumptions that serve as the foundational bases for the book. Within these five assumptions, they clearly address the economy of the culture according to Stevens. She attempts to show the temple as a community welfare agency that provides services to orphans. The point is stressed by the indication that, “Perhaps....orphans worked in the temple precincts in return for food, clothing and shelter.”⁵²

Also Psalm 147:14 provides another example and records that God would provide the people with wheat. Although not directly related to the temple, but “With storage facilities for surplus commodities, the Jerusalem temple would have been the logical candidate to supply wheat to the community in times of shortages.”⁵³ Based on these arguments, Stevens builds her case that the temple had concerns and remedies for those who were marginalized and economically distressed. It was her belief that these economic concerns were independent of utilizing and viewing the temple as a place of worship solely. Stevens further pushed her point that the temple operated according to the economic challenges within the culture by indicating that the temple collected taxes. Culturally, during the time period, taxes were collected “From the people for the royal

⁵¹ Marty E. Stevens, *Temples, Tithes and Taxes: The Temple and Economic Life of Ancient Israel* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), 209.

⁵² Stevens, *Temples, Tithes and Taxes*, 133.

⁵³ Stevens, *Temples, Tithes and Taxes*, 134.

household.”⁵⁴ Stevens uses 1 Kings chapters four and five as the biblical text, which undergirds this idea with regard to King Solomon and the construction of the temple. She argues that, “To the extent that the broader ancient Near East culture influenced the economic environment of Israel/Judah, it seems reasonable to expect that the temple did make loans of its surplus commodities, especially silver and grain.”⁵⁵

Although the economic reflection is valuable and provides another side of the spectrum, many scholars continue to embrace the Jesus model of giving. Therefore, the “self-lowering” of Jesus becomes the paradigm and is demonstrated in the central story of Jesus himself. It is through these lenses that Paul makes sense of his own understanding of generosity and the concern for the poor. Paul’s notion of generosity is rooted in Christ, in his recalling the life and death of Christ, and is the clear understanding he has of Christ’s selfless love toward others, and not for his benefit that Paul sees as supreme example to motivate the Corinthians to emulate and imitate Christ in their generosity. Ultimately, Jesus can be viewed as being rich, but He became poor to save the sins of the world, which is a reflection of the grace of God.⁵⁶ Therefore, it is indicated that,

All that is loving and generous in all moral beings is from one Source, and that is God. He is the primal Font whence all flows. Wherever you see love, in young or old, rich or poor, cultured or rude, you see an emanation from a reflection of the Eternal. As you may see the ocean in the dewdrop, you may see God in every throb of affection in human souls.⁵⁷

Paul’s collection in his churches in the Mediterranean basin for aid to the poor in the church in Jerusalem is important to him. This was not just a matter of satisfying a

⁵⁴ Stevens, *Temples, Tithes and Taxes*, 125.

⁵⁵ Stevens, *Temples, Tithes and Taxes*, 150.

⁵⁶ Furnish, *The Anchor Bible: II Corinthians*, 402.

⁵⁷ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 108.

particular human need for Paul, but it was also connected to his concern for the unity of the Jewish and Gentile elements of the church. Paul wants to encourage the Corinthian church to be generous. In support of his plea he appeals first (in vv.1-5) to the fact that the churches in Macedonia have given generously, in spite of their own deep poverty. However, the central focus of Paul's theology of giving is cemented in the story of the life and death of the Jesus, the One Paul met on the Damascus road. The personal encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus is deeply rooted in Paul's mental and emotional being and it was in the forefront of his mind. Further, the encounter was consistently reflected upon in the ministry of Paul. As a result of the encounter, it became the Gospel preached and taught by him. The encounter became foundational for Paul because he experienced first hand the generosity of Jesus' giving by the grace that was extended on the Damascus road. It is the grace of God in Jesus Christ to which the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments bear witness. It is this grace, which is the gospel, which the church has to proclaim. It is this grace by which we live and try to understand fully the basis for our generosity and all other acts of obedience to the gospel.

It was not coincidental that Paul's writing in 2 Corinthians 8:1 starts with "grace" and ends in chapter 9:14-15 with "grace." The term was reflected upon on ten occurrences and with six different tenses.

"Grace," referring either to God's unconditional kindness lavishly displayed (8:9) or to God's enablement, especially his enablement to participate worthily in the collection (8:1; 9:8, 14). "Privilege" or "favor," used of the honor or opportunity of participating in the offering (8:4). "Act of grace," denoting the collection itself as a charitable and generous act (8:6). "Grace of giving," referring to the virtuous act of sharing or of affording help (8:7). "Offering" or "charitable work,"

describing the collection as an expression and proof of goodwill (8:19). "Thanks," the verbal expression of gratitude for an act of benevolence (8:16; 9:15).⁵⁸

As the concept of grace is embraced, understood and applied, Christianity gains a better understanding that class systems should not exist. It becomes easier to understand that everyone was created in the image of God. The reality is embraced that Jesus died for all of humanity and everyone was created equal. Grace serves as the common denominator for equality to exist within humanity.

Paul's notion of generosity is that it results in equality. In verses twelve through fifteen in chapter eight, he maintains that having the interest of others in mind while giving generously and according to proportion will result in equality. He remarks on the subject of generosity and equality by indicating that the desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard-pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality, as it is written: "He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little," as recorded in 2 Corinthians 8:13-15.

The tithing concept that helps Christianity to understand equality is another example. As Christians, we are expected to tithe ten percent back to God. Everyone may not be capable of tithing at the same amount, but everyone can tithe at the same percent, which creates a level of equality. It creates a system of giving that is consistent throughout all of the Body of Believers. Paul was not calling for a reversal of roles of rich and poor, as had been part of Hellenistic literature in Philo and others; but rather, Paul

⁵⁸ M. J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 559–560.

was calling for equality and fairness. He realized that there were extremes of wealth and poverty, but that this is not acceptable in the Christian community. Rather, those who have surplus should contribute to those who have needs, according to the proportion that the individuals have, so that no one in the body of Christ has any lack. The needs of the poor and those in need should be met out of the surplus of others. This was clearly the notion in Acts 2:44-45: "All believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need." The same concept is portrayed in Acts 4:36-37, which states, "Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostle called Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement") sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet."

Again, Professor Lim's comments are exceedingly helpful to our understanding of Paul's perspective on generosity and equality for the church. "By stressing the notion of reciprocity, Paul underscores the belief that no one should out give another in order to attain a higher status over the other, but should give out of a cheerful and willing heart."⁵⁹ Paul quotes Exodus and the account of the experience of God's people in the wilderness where manna was distributed according to each person's need. This, for Paul, was to show the Corinthians that this was the proper pattern for the distribution of material possessions. His point can also be shared with others, and despite their generous heart to give, they will still have enough. God intends that there should be a distribution of what others need so that inequities and inequalities may be eliminated. Murray J. Harris in *The Second Epistle in the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* offers a clarifying comment on this topic:

⁵⁹ Kar Yong Lim, "Generosity from Pauline Perspective: Insights from Paul's Letters to the Corinthians," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 37, no.1 (January 2013).

The equality that the people of God of old experienced in the wilderness was the result of a divine miracle and was enforced and inescapable. The equality to be experienced by the new people of God, on the other hand, would be the result of human initiative and would be voluntary and so not automatic.⁶⁰

Paul's understanding of generosity is that it is a confession of the Gospel. It is Paul's unfailing commitment to the Gospel that he spent so much time and energy on the Jerusalem collection project, urging the Corinthians to practice generosity. Clearly, he sees this as an act of obedience to the Gospel. Their obedience to the Gospel will not only bring relief to the poor and the needy, but will also bring glory to God from the recipients. It is most clearly stated by him in the ninth chapter and the thirteenth verse, "Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men [others or "many"] will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else."

The recipients' praise is grounded in two things: first, "for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ," and second, "for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else" [v.13]. *The Gateway Commentary* points out that the first phrase is literally "for the obedience of your confession." "The Judean recipients will praise God second, for the Corinthians' generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else," as recorded in the "*Gateway Commentary*." This is the third time Paul uses the word "*haplotes*" generosity in these passages, and the "noun denotes simplicity of intent with respect to one's finances," "openheartedness" (8:2, 9:11, 13). It is generosity of heart, not the pocketbook that counts. The recipients will praise God not merely for a gift of money but also for the fellowship in Christ that the gift expresses.

⁶⁰ Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle in the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 594.

The willingness of the Corinthian Christians to be generous and to participate in this project of Paul's would mean that lines of race and social class would be broken down through Christ. In their confession of Christ through their generous gift, it would constitute a concrete gesture of love and a visible and demonstrable act that speaks of the unity of the body of Christ. Indeed, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus," (Galatians 3:28). For the Apostle Paul, the confession of the Gospel involves more than creeds repeated, pious words mouthed, or rituals repeated; for him, confession of the Gospel should show itself in action, in generosity of spirit and heart as well as material offering.

It is through the confession of the Gospel of Christ that authentic love is demonstrated so that those who were once enemies and strangers can be brought ultimately into reconciliation with Christ and each other. All of this will give generous praise and glory to the Almighty God. For Paul, it is the grace of God in Jesus Christ "*charis*" that makes it possible for us to have anything, and therefore it is in response to that grace that we give joyfully and cheerfully. It is out of God's effective, overflowing mercy that the gift of life is offered to us. There is but one response to generous hearts that give faithfully in praise and adoration to God, not only out of need, but the desire within every Christian to respond to this overabundant and extravagant act of the grace of God, which has been given to us in Jesus Christ.

In addition to the perspective of Paul, the acts of the Macedonian Churches cannot go without mention and certainly cannot be ignored. Their actions were commendable and remarkable to say the least. In evaluating their actions, they were self-sacrificing,

spontaneous, earnest and religious.⁶¹ We witness the self-sacrificing of the Macedonians when their reality was deep poverty, yet the desire to give was deeply rooted within. “It would seem from this that they could ill afford –as the phrase is–to render any help in the way of property to others, and yet their contributions “abounded unto the riches of their liberality.”⁶² Their action to give was given from a place of spontaneity and it was pressed from a place of inward love. Their desire to give was not based on outward appeal or from the perspective of impressing others or for bragging rights as it related to their abilities or accomplishment. Instead, giving was a true reflection of their Christian morals and values. “It is interesting that Paul understands that God’s grace does not lighten the Macedonians’ afflictions nor remove their deep poverty. Instead, it opens their hearts and their purse strings to others.”⁶³ As a result, we are exposed to the lesson of giving earnestly. The Macedonian Churches could have developed excuses such as distance, lack of knowledge, their personal affliction and lack of resources.⁶⁴ However, excuses were not the option; instead, “they earnestly seized the opportunity to render what help they could.”⁶⁵ Finally, the Macedonian Churches taught the valuable lesson on religion, in that not only did they give of their money, but also they extended the boundaries and gave of,

Their time, thought, energy, primarily to Christ as their Lord, and then to the apostle as his minister. And this they had done because they allowed the will of

⁶¹ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 198.

⁶² Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 198.

⁶³ D. E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, vol. 29 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 366.

⁶⁴ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 198.

⁶⁵ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 198.

God to work upon your will. Consecration of self to God is at once the cause and virtue of all our gifts to men. Unless we give ourselves to God, all our gifts to men are morally worthless.⁶⁶

The Macedonian Churches' actions were comparable to the actions of Jesus. His philanthropic efforts were self-sacrificing. "Of all the myriads of men that have appeared on this earth, and that will appear, he alone had the choosing of his circumstances, and he chose poverty. *His philanthropy aimed supremely at the promotion of spiritual wealth.* 'That ye through his poverty might be rich.'"⁶⁷ Clearly, there is a tremendous difference between spiritual wealth and material possession.

In conclusion, the exploration of these two texts provides a biblical foundation that has been dealt with in the previous pages as the writer's hermeneutical methodology. That is to say, an effort in understanding these biblical texts as the backdrop and theoretical underpinning for a project that seeks to recover ways to teach and preach about generosity in the Bible, the Old and New Testament. Both texts are timely today, especially as churches suffer from a new economic issue in which the present generation seems less generous than the previous one, and tends to live off of the generosity, reserves, and endowments of prior generations. The economic, sociological and generational issues make it frighteningly clear: this is a time of peril. However, it can be a time of opportunity if Christianity can recover, re-discover our heritage and roots, and follow the examples of the forefathers in their generosity; for, indeed, they were following the example of our Lord who gave so generously of Himself – even His life on a cross! Furthermore, as Christ willingly gave of himself, we as Christians should follow His example and generously give to others within the community.

⁶⁶ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 198.

⁶⁷ Spence and Exell, *The Pulpit Commentary*, 198.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

The historical foundation chapter will focus on the historical perspective of generous giving. The historical perspective of giving will reflect generous giving within the church as well as other organizations. When researching a subject or topic, it is always important to view the historical perspective because in many instances the history helps one to understand why policies, processes and procedures exist or do not exist. Also, from the biblical perspective, the history of the Nation of Israel was always encouraged. Traditionally, the Israelites would recite and teach the history from generation to generation to ensure the youth of their heritage and relationship with God. The relevance of passing down the history of the Israelites was to help the various generations to understand the love that God possessed for His people. Therefore, looking at the historical perspective of generous giving will help future generations to not only understand the process of generous giving but to also help them to embrace the concept of generous giving.

Malachi 3:10 informs us to “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of host.” Since the church’s inception, there has been a need for monetary support. The relief of those not capable of taking care of themselves, financing missionary expeditions to spread the Gospel and public meeting expenses are just a few of the reasons why churches need the

support of patrons.¹ Throughout time, there have been a number of methods by which one could contribute financially to sustain the church: voluntary offerings, giving the first fruits, tithing, taxation and endowments, just to name a few.² It is time to take a deeper look at what drives the church to ask for support, what drives parishioners to give to the church and how the face of giving has changed throughout the history of the church.

The origins of Black giving and the organizations around which it is focused are rooted in efforts to overcome oppression. Its history shows that Blacks are motivated by those who are close to them and efforts that make a difference in the daily lives of others in the community. In many cases, Black philanthropy has been a response to discrimination – slavery and segregation in the past; today, inequality in education and the workplace.³

Sam Gough stated in a conference that the, “Tradition of giving ‘tithes and offerings’ began as early as the Colonial period when free Blacks in the North established Black churches to aid the needy African Americans.”⁴ As a result of consistent giving, tithes and offerings from the African American community, there have been many benefits both within and outside of the church walls. For example, the historical giving of the African American community has resulted in the establishment of businesses, more vibrant and efficient churches as well as the “first Black-owned and operated [educational] institutions.”⁵ Another example of the power of black philanthropy is the extensions within the community that resulted in mutual aid societies and fraternal organizations

¹ Luther P. Powell, *Money and the Church* (New York, NY: Association Press, 1962), 15.

² Powell, *Money and the Church*, 15.

³ Marybeth Gasman and Sibby Anderson-Thompkins, *Fundraising From Black-College Alumni: Successful Strategies for Supporting Alma Mater* (Washington, DC: Council for Advancement and Support of Education, 2003), 13.

⁴ Gasman and Anderson-Thompkins, *Fundraising From Black-College Alumni*, 14.

⁵ Bradford Smith et al., *Philanthropy in Communities of Color* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 10.

being developed.⁶ Lincoln and Mamiya indicate that the development of the mutual aid societies was the forerunner to more structured organizations that are thriving within the community today such as the Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which is another reflection of the historical perspective of giving as it relates to the African American church.⁷

Beginning in 1775 with the establishment of the Prince Hall Masons, fraternal organizations began to work closely with the Black church. These organizations were first and foremost communal and social, but they were also committed to healing social ills and contributing to the community. On many occasions members contributed funds and gifts in kind for impoverished women and children.⁸

“Since its inception, the Black church has been the center of African American giving and the single most effective fund-raising mechanism for Blacks.”⁹ The authors of *Philanthropy in Communities of Color* are in agreement with the effectiveness of the African American church and they further stress that, “The creation and evolution of the Black church has been the most significant factor in the political, social, cultural, educational, and philanthropic development of African Americans.”¹⁰

The tradition of mutual aid lay deep in the African heritage, which stressed a greater communalism and social solidarity than either European or American customs allowed. These incipient traditions of mutual aid and self-help in the

⁶ Cheryl Hall-Russell and Robert H. Kasberg, *African American Traditions of Giving and Serving: A Midwest Perspective* (Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Center on Philanthropy, 1997).

⁷ C. Eric Lincoln and Lawrence H. Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), 242.

⁸ Gasman and Anderson-Thompkins, *Fundraising From Black-College Alumni*, 15.

⁹ Calvin Pressley, “Financial Contributions for the Kingdom for the Elect: Giving Patterns in the Black Church,” *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* (Spring 1995).

¹⁰ Smith et al., *Philanthropy in Communities of Color*, 9.

slave quarters were formalized and legitimized with the Christianizing of the slaves in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹¹

With the weight of the Bible, the majority of African Americans are taught from a young age that they have an obligation to give to the church. Through personal engagement and the establishment of a trusting bond, Black preachers convey the needs of the church and consistently encourage parishioners to support the work of the church – the will of God.¹²

In order to get a holistic view of giving in the church, let us evaluate the biblical principles. After Jesus ascended into Heaven, His followers began the mighty task of spreading the Gospel and bringing followers to Christ.¹³ In following the Lord's command of building a church, finances were needed. At first, believers were giving what they wanted because they wanted to give, and there was no set amount or expectation with respect to the provisions being offered.¹⁴ Paul writes to the Church at Corinth, "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn so that collections need not be taken when I come." (1 Corinthians 16:2). Although Paul did not advise that a specific amount be set aside, his directive began to drive the foundation for financial support for the church. Why did believers have to put aside funds for the early church? When Christ called for followers, many people left their trades to spread His Word and follow Christ's instructions. Now if they left their trade that means that they had little to no income.¹⁵ Provisions were still needed for these individuals, and the church was there to assist them through their difficult season. The

¹¹ Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 242.

¹² Lincoln and Mamiya, *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, 242-243.

¹³ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 15.

¹⁴ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 15.

¹⁵ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 15-16.

need to help the poor in Jerusalem resulted in an accumulation of funds that eventually resulted in the development of trustees who oversaw the collection and distribution of the funds.¹⁶ The church was on a mission to care for those that had no one to care for them.

Not only were the early funds used to aid the sick and the poor, but they were also used to support those missionaries that traveled near and far on behalf of Christ and His church.¹⁷ In the Apostle Paul's letter to the church at Philippi, he says in Philippians 4:14-16,

In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress. You Philippians indeed know that in the early days of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone. For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me help for my needs more than once.

The church at Philippi gave to Paul out of its own volition and of its own accord. They understood that while he was out meeting the needs of God's people, he had needs that had to be met. Even though it is noted that Paul faced hunger and want many times throughout his missionary work, he clearly was grateful to the Philippians for providing the means for him to continue the work of the Lord.¹⁸ The church at Philippi assisted Paul when no other church was able or willing to do so. They are an excellent example of a church that gives generously to further the Kingdom of God!

In addition to giving voluntary offerings, early Christians were also encouraged to give of their first fruits.¹⁹ Although there was not a set amount for each person to give, the giving of the first fruits was groundbreaking, since people were expected to give

¹⁶ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 16.

¹⁷ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 16.

¹⁸ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 17.

¹⁹ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 19.

because it was the right thing to do and not because the church was in need.²⁰ Irenaeus, an early church Father and a Bishop in Gaul (modern day France), purported that believers must give of their first fruits in accordance with Jesus' serving his disciples wine and bread at the Last Supper.²¹ Since even the Lord Himself gave first of what He had to others, then the assumption is that it should be required of us as well, if we are to be true followers of Him. While the support of the missionaries and the poor were the primary use of the voluntary offerings, people were encouraged to give of their first fruits not out of need, but out of "...gratitude for the gifts of creation and redemption."²² The giving of the first fruits began to shift the motive for giving to the church from extrinsic to intrinsic.

Although tithing can be considered a type of voluntary offering since one can choose whether or not to tithe, it is different in the fact that now a certain standard has been established, the tenth. So when did tithing come about? Historians have surmised that tithing came about around the first and second centuries.²³ Even Jesus, the Christ, mentioned tithing twice, as noted in the Gospels of Luke and Matthew. Luke 18:12 says, "I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income" and Matthew 23:23 says, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others." The tithe is important, because it calls for givers to reach a certain standard of giving.

²⁰ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 19.

²¹ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 19.

²² Powell, *Money and the Church*, 21.

²³ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 21.

Now of course one would not be admonished for giving over the tenth, but as stated earlier, a minimum had been set. Powell states that the “tithe is mentioned occasionally in the second century, but the emphasis is upon the fact that Christians, living under grace, will not be limited by a tithe.”²⁴ For early churches, the giving of the tithe was the bare minimum. As servants of the Lord and His Church, early Christians were asked to give more than what was required of them, since God continuously gave them grace and mercy.²⁵ In the third century, tithing was now viewed by many as the “standard of giving.”²⁶ *The Apostolical Constitutions* implied that even though man was not required to sacrifice animals anymore as an offering to God, he was still responsible for providing for those who could not provide for themselves.²⁷ The tithe did not replace the aforementioned methods of giving, like voluntary offerings and the first fruits, but good Christians were expected to give to the church in a combination of these ways.

In Walter Brueggeman’s book, “*Deuteronomy*,” he indicates that tithing is the beginning of social legislation (14:22-29), by stating that,

Tithe concerns the public management and distribution of funds under a covenantal impetus. This statute is arranged in three distinct commands, the basic law of tithe (vv. 22-23), a provision for those at a distance from “the place” (vv. 24-27), and the third year tithe (vv. 28-29). The tithe is to be understood as a tax paid to an overlord in acknowledgment that the owner of the land has a due claim on its produce (see 12: 17). Thus tenant farmers to this day regularly “owe” the landowner a certain percentage of the crop, a percentage often larger than the traditional 10 percent. When the tithe is understood as a tax, then the question is, to whom is it owed? It is likely that such a tax was paid to imperial overlords. (See 1 Sam 8: 15-17.) In the horizon of Deuteronomy, however, neither the king

²⁴ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 21.

²⁵ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 21.

²⁶ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 22.

²⁷ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 23.

nor any alien imperial power could claim a tithe, because none of them is the rightful owner of the land.²⁸

Brueggeman further argues that the tithe was brought in the acknowledgement of the “unequal relationship of owner and tenant and the owner is YHWH. The tithe is unlike any other tax or payment because the owner does not need the tithes that Israel offers. Further the claim is made that YHWH focus is placed on the gesture that acknowledges his generous sovereignty. Therefore, as tenants, Christians are expected to give generously to a God that has given generously to us.

Another interesting perspective raised by Brueggeman is the fact that tithing has a pedagogical function in that, “The annual excursion of giving and receiving is to instruct Israel and its young about the peculiar character of YHWH.”²⁹ Therefore, Israel is expected to fear or acknowledge God as the owner of the land and giver of life. In return God accepts Israel’s grateful tithe and turns it into another wave of generosity.³⁰

Brueggeman’s work builds a strong foundation on the concept of tithing, giving and generosity and he establishes the case from the perspective of not only bringing to the owner through a generous heart, but the concept of expanding “within your town.”³¹

Thus the religious rite is transposed into an act that concerns the local economy, a 10 percent infusion of extra goods into the community. Second, this tithe “within your towns” is to be deployed for those disadvantaged who have no land from which to bring their own tithe. The landed bring an offering that is for the joy and well-being of the landless. The text names the three traditional landless, vulnerable groups: resident aliens, orphans, and widows, those who depend upon the generosity of the community for their survival. The triad of YHWH-Israel-

²⁸ Walter Brueggemann, *Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries: Deuteronomy* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2011), Kindle Locations 2523-2529.

²⁹ Brueggemann, *Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries*, Kindle Locations 2523-2529.

³⁰ Brueggemann, *Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries*, Kindle Locations 2523-2529.

³¹ Brueggemann, *Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries*, Kindle Locations 2523-2529.

land is recharacterized beyond the conventional requirement of taxation for an owner.³²

In essence, the message is being conveyed, that as Christians embrace the concept of tithing and giving generously, funds can be used to benefit the church, the body, and the community. Therefore, the tithe can be viewed as an economic source, which belongs to God, but used within the community. The reality is that we serve a God who owns the land and is not in need of our resources, but it is used as a method to replenish what He has given through the lens of generosity. As users of the land, Christians are expected to reciprocate the generosity that has been extended to us by the Owner of the land, which creates a “bottomless generosity.”³³ “An economy that is rooted in the generous character of YHWH is an economy in which there is more than enough, so that a YHWH-rooted economy gives the lie to all economic theory that is based in scarcity.”³⁴ With the generous nature in giving, it creates more volatile communities with surplus to feed the hunger and those less fortunate, which became a common practice.

In addition to tithing, voluntary offerings, and the first fruits, the early church also procured endowments as a means of financial support.³⁵ This soon became the chief method of income for the church. As endowments became the more popular method of garnering monies for the church, it became more and more difficult to keep this land out of the hands of the emperors. In order to circumvent the confiscation of their land, the church began to sell some of the properties and divide the money received into “...three

³² Brueggemann, *Abingdon Old Testament*, Kindle Locations 2523-2529.

³³ Brueggemann, *Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries*, Kindle Locations 2563-2565.

³⁴ Brueggemann, *Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries*, Kindle Locations 2566-2567.

³⁵ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 23.

equal parts: one part to the church, one to the bishop, and one to the rest of the clergy.”³⁶ Most of the property that was not sold, they turned into burial grounds, thereby making them unable to be taken by the emperors and others in power. Christian churches did whatever they could to hold onto their properties and the proceeds from their sales; however, in 313 A.D., the emperor Maximum, along with Constantine and Licinius, declared that all land taken be returned to the church. Churches began to use this land not just for money, but to build up more churches for the advancement of the Kingdom.³⁷

One would think that with the endowments being returned to churches, the church would have no more issues with land being bequeathed to them. However, after getting some much-deserved support from Constantine, churches of the fourth century found that too many people began leaving their land to the church. Now this would not ordinarily be an issue, except that individuals were leaving all of their land and legacies to the church, and nothing for their dependents.³⁸ In essence, the church was acquiring many pieces of land, but then had to support those individuals left destitute because their loved ones were leaving everything to the church. In order to rectify this problem, laws were written into effect that helped curb those that gave to the point that their families were destitute and also priests that tried to get people to leave their land to them and not to the church.³⁹ With these new parameters in place, endowments and legacies became a staple in the church’s financial arena.

³⁶ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 23-24.

³⁷ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 24.

³⁸ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 25.

³⁹ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 25.

It was also during the fourth century that people began to use the word oblation to describe the spirit a person has when bestowing a gift to the church. The method of giving was not of importance, but the motive for giving was important now.⁴⁰ More often than not, the motive for giving was quickly becoming rooted in the need to obtain salvation.⁴¹ In the beginning, oblations were simply food and wine being left at an altar. However, people soon began to leave money and other gifts, which made it difficult for priests to determine if the gift was an oblation to secure the salvation of the giver and their family, or an offering to the church and God.⁴² With the use of oblations, the motivation for giving was still intrinsic, but the giver wanted something in return now...a secure place in the Kingdom of God.

While oblations were becoming more and more popular during the fourth century, fewer and fewer people were giving of their first fruits as a way to support the church financially.⁴³ So what took the place of first fruits? During this century, and throughout the next couple hundred years, tithing soon became a primary method of financing the church. Now ministers and priests were actually creating sermons and exhortations that focused on relaying the importance of tithing to their parishioners. Fathers of the church and future Saints, Jerome and Ambrose of Milan, often wrote about the importance of the tithe.⁴⁴ Ambrose of Milan had this message for Christians:

⁴⁰ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 25.

⁴¹ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 26.

⁴² Powell, *Money and the Church*, 26.

⁴³ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 26.

⁴⁴ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 27.

God has reserved the tenth part to Himself, and therefore it is not lawful for a man to retain what God had reserved for Himself. To thee He has given nine parts, for Himself He has reserved the tenth part, and if thou shalt not give to God the tenth part, God will take from thee the nine parts.⁴⁵

This message about tithing, along with his other writings, which mirror the one above, was very influential to preachers after the fourth century. Leaders of the church were not only asking for the tithe, but now there were ramifications for not tithing. Although the church was not punishing people who did not give a tenth, it is implied that God would by taking the tenth and everything else.⁴⁶ Augustine and Chrysostom tended to use scripture to impart the importance of the tithe, and how the tithe should really be the minimum that one gives.⁴⁷ Augustine makes reference to what Jesus says of the Pharisees in Luke 18:12, “he says that because the people of old gave a tenth, the coffers of the churches were never empty.” However, because people in the fourth century were becoming less and less devoted to God, the church’s reserves were being drained. Chrysostom goes one step further by stating that those that do not go above and beyond what the Pharisees gave will not inherit the Kingdom of God. In other words, if one does not give more than ten percent, then they will not enter into the gates of Heaven. He preached that worthy followers of Christ should be giving about three-tenths to one half of their treasures back to God. He also said that since many people will never make the sacrifice that is needed to please God, “There are few that will be saved.”⁴⁸ With tithing being preached everywhere by leaders of the church, there was a need for more than the

⁴⁵ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 27.

⁴⁶ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 28.

⁴⁷ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 28-29.

⁴⁸ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 29.

well-known leaders to express to parishioners the importance of tithing. It is said that priests of this time period would bring up tithing during Confessional. Some brought up the story of Cain and Abel, and fashioned Abel to be a tithing man while Cain was not. They tended to purport that "...the first murder was committed because a dishonest tither was jealous of an honest tither."⁴⁹ Eventually, linking importance to tithing was not enough. In the sixth century, the second Counsel of Mascon wrote this canon regarding tithes:

Wherefore we do appoint and decree, that the ancient custom be revived among the faithful, and that all the people bring in their Tithes to those who attend the Divine offices of the Church. If anyone shall be contumacious to these our most wholesome orders, let him be forever separated from the Communion of the Church.⁵⁰

This canon is crucial, because it now sets a clear punishment for individuals who do not tithe, which was excommunication.

We have seen in just a few hundred years the financial support of the church turn from voluntary to involuntary in some ways. The offerings and the first fruits were given because a need was clear and had to be met; however, no parameters on how much or how little to give were set. People gave as much and as little as they wanted to during the early years of the church. Landowners were able to leave their lands to the church through endowments, but certain rules had to be put in place to make sure that lands were safe and the families left behind were also cared for properly. Next, the oblations began to shape not what people gave, but how they gave of their treasures. This internal motivation to please God and get into Heaven provided an opportunity for tithing to be

⁴⁹ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 29.

⁵⁰ Morris Joseph Fuller and Edward Miall, *Our Title Deeds* (London, UK: Griffith, Farran, Okeden and Welsh, 1890), 41-42.

the primary source of income for the church. Tying the importance of tithing to the Holy Word was not enough. People needed to know that non-tithers would not be tolerated. Thus the decrees were established and the canons warning those that did not tithe of an end in the relationship between them and God's church. The church was changing, growing steadily, and as such, the methods for procuring financial support had to change as well.

According to Powell, the primary methods for gaining monies during the Middle-Ages were gifts, vacancies, papal taxations and church courts. New methods were needed since the church and its financial needs were expanding quickly. Around 1017 A.D., a treasury of sorts, called a camera, was developed in order to keep track of and garner church funds.⁵¹ Individuals involved with the camera soon determined that traditional methods of collecting funds were not enough. As the church evolved, so did its methods of gaining monetary support. Powell notes that with gifts, support could be given through legacies, subsidies, tributes and traditional gifts. Legacies continued to be a form of support throughout the Middle-Ages, with some being recorded in the camera's registries while other properties went straight to the pope. As for subsidies, they quickly went from being voluntary to involuntary. Although subsidies were gifts that popes requested, the requests soon turned to demands once the number of subsidies began to decline, according to Powell. Mandates like the papal mandate in 1262, "Required the English prelates to pay a subsidy to the pope on the basis that the Roman Church, by divine institution, had undertaken burdens of expense for the defense of ecclesiastical

⁵¹ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 32.

liberty."⁵² It appears as if the church took matters into its own hands once funds ran low. Although the subsidies brought in a sizable amount of income, there were still other types of gifts for the church to receive.

The third type of gift, a tribute, was given in exchange for protection. For instance, if a lay lord needed protection, they would give their lands to the pope, who would own the land but allow the lay lord to continue to work and live on it.⁵³ By having the church own the land, the lay lords were protected and the church gained a tribute...seems like a plus for both sides. Lastly, traditional gifts like oblations were given, which were voluntary offerings. Powell speaks of lords and kings whose successors decided to try to opt out of the offering. This attempt was unsuccessful and the successors were held accountable for the oblations promised by their predecessors.

Vacancies also allowed for the church to gain income through a variety of ways: spoils, fruits during the vacancy, annates, expectations, illegitimate fruits, services, pallium and pluralities.⁵⁴ Whether the vacancy occurred due to the death of a bishop or reappointment, the church gained control over the finances. When a clergyman passed away, his personal possessions (the spoils) were often disputed over by family, the church and the presiding king or lord of the land. To calm the parties fighting over the spoils, the church penned canons that discouraged the quarreling and decreed that no one could take their portion of the spoils without the blessing of the bishop(s).⁵⁵ However, this did not stop kings and nobles from claiming the property for their own, and so, the

⁵² Powell, *Money and the Church*, 34.

⁵³ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 34.

⁵⁴ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 35.

⁵⁵ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 35-36.

pope eventually stepped in and claimed the spoils that belonged to the church. Thus was the practice for any "...archbishop, bishop, abbot, or any ecclesiastic who died."⁵⁶

The last three ways that the church collected money during a vacancy were through services, the pallium and pluralities. According to Powell, services were, "Fees paid by bishops, abbots and high prelates in general for nomination, consecration, and confirmation of the office."⁵⁷ Originally, services were to be offerings that one could make freely; however, if one did not pay the service, then excommunication was one's only other choice. Since the amounts of the services rose and rose, it allowed for men with money and wealth to procure positions in the church rather than those that were spiritually fit to lead.⁵⁸ Corruption once again reared its ugly head as people essentially paid for their religious positions within the church. The pallium was similar to the services in that the richer you were, the likelier you were to either obtain a position within the church or keep the one you had.⁵⁹

When considering the historical roots of giving, one must examine terms such as philanthropy or charity. Charity, giving and philanthropy have been in existence for thousands of years. Charity is generally given to alleviate an immediate need, but does not resolve the social ill within the community. Philanthropy, however, is a practice that is instituted in an attempt to alleviate the social ill within a community by resolving the issue and providing a remedy through training and teaching. Philanthropy can be broadly defined as love for humankind. It is derived from the Greek words "*philos*," which means

⁵⁶ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 36.

⁵⁷ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 40.

⁵⁸ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 41.

⁵⁹ Powell, *Money and the Church*, 41.

loving, and "*anthropos*," which means humankind. A person who practices philanthropy is called a philanthropist.⁶⁰ The Greater Kansas City Community Foundation tracked the history of giving to the Hebrews in 2500 B.C.E., which is when they provided a tax or tithe to benefit the poor. In 500 B.C.E., the word philanthropy was introduced in the drama "*Prometheus Bound*."⁶¹ In 387 B.C.E., Plato's Academy was established, which was a working group of volunteers.

Around 28 B.C.E. is when the first Roman emperor, Augustus, gave public aid to approximately 200,000 people.⁶² Moses provides the eight levels of charity around 1180 C.E., and in 1601 the Charitable Uses Act by Parliament introduced giving.⁶³ By 1643, the first American fundraising drive was organized at Harvard University and 500 pounds were raised. By the seventeenth century, various charity organizations were being developed such as Sisters of Charity in Latin America. Philanthropy and giving were also taking shape in the United States, and in 1914 Congress passed the Revenue Act, which exempted charitable organizations from paying taxes. In the same year, The Cleveland Foundation was established as the world's first community foundation in Cleveland, Ohio. With charitable organizations being exempted from paying taxes and foundations being established, the charitable giving train was moving full speed ahead; donor advisory funds were established by 1931 and corporations began deducting

⁶⁰ Catherine Zimmer, "Philanthropy," Learning to Give, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.learningtogive.org/resources/philanthropy>.

⁶¹ "A Brief History of Giving," Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, October 25, 2012, accessed February 26, 2016, <https://www.growyourgiving.org/giving-blog/brief-history-giving>.

⁶² "A Brief History of Giving," accessed February 26, 2016, <https://www.growyourgiving.org/giving-blog/brief-history-giving>.

⁶³ "A Brief History of Giving," accessed February 26, 2016, <https://www.growyourgiving.org/giving-blog/brief-history-giving>.

charitable contributions.⁶⁴ By the mid-1930s, the concept of charitable giving and philanthropy had established deep roots in America and the world. Although charitable giving is traced back to 2500 B.C.E., the concept of giving is one of the oldest human activities that pre-dates civilization and may go back to the origin of our species.⁶⁵ Some research dates the art of giving to the primitive caveman culture, where gifts were commonly used to express affection. Further, it is proposed that gift giving was a public demonstration of leadership among tribes or clans.⁶⁶

Although giving was on the primitive side with the cavemen, often consisting of a rock or bark from a tree, it progressed with time. Within the Egyptian era, gifts were given to the pharaohs and their massive wealth was stored in pyramids. In the Roman culture, gifts were presented as good luck tokens, which influenced Western culture.⁶⁷ By the Medieval period, gifts were used to manipulate favors from the king or were used to exemplify allegiance during periods of war. The gifts included coins and precious metals, and these types of giving sentiments continue to exist today.⁶⁸

The giving of gifts persists today and the concept of giving covers the span of every celebration imaginable including: birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, all major and minor holidays, special and non-special occasions. People give to friends, family

⁶⁴ "A Brief History of Giving," accessed February 26, 2016, <https://www.growyourgiving.org/giving-blog/brief-history-giving>.

⁶⁵ "The Origins and History of Gift Giving," Curious History, February 9, 2015, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.curioushistory.com/the-origins-and-history-of-gift-giving/>.

⁶⁶ "The Origins and History of Gift Giving," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.curioushistory.com/the-origins-and-history-of-gift-giving/>.

⁶⁷ "The Origins and History of Gift Giving," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.curioushistory.com/the-origins-and-history-of-gift-giving/>.

⁶⁸ "The Origins and History of Gift Giving," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.curioushistory.com/the-origins-and-history-of-gift-giving/>.

members and foes alike. The concept of giving has morphed into major companies and businesses making the bulk of their revenue by capitalizing on the act of giving for holidays and special occasions. Small businesses and large corporations alike cater to the giving concept and make a lucrative living in doing so. These organizations are successful because of the psychological concept behind the act of giving. According to psychologists, the act of giving is rewarding because it permits an opportunity for people to connect.⁶⁹ The level of connection varies between the giver and the recipient. The giver is afforded the opportunity to share expressions, feelings and emotions that they feel towards the recipient. The recipient in turn receives the feelings and emotions based on the connection that is made by the giver.⁷⁰ “This feeling is one that enlightens the soul and brings out the best in us. There is an old saying ‘it is better to give than receive’ and it has a special meaning especially when the realization of the benefits that it provides to those who give.”⁷¹ Additionally, research indicates that people give for various reasons such as the feeling of happiness, improving the state of mind, creating a greater social connection and it is contagious.⁷²

Although giving, charity and philanthropy are commonplace in the United States, and while they exist in other countries, the level and consistency of giving drastically differs. In evaluating the history of philanthropy in the United States, there are several

⁶⁹ “The Origins and History of Gift Giving,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.curioushistory.com/the-origins-and-history-of-gift-giving/>.

⁷⁰ “The Origins and History of Gift Giving,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.curioushistory.com/the-origins-and-history-of-gift-giving/>.

⁷¹ “The Origins and History of Gift Giving,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.curioushistory.com/the-origins-and-history-of-gift-giving/>.

⁷² “The Origins and History of Gift Giving,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.curioushistory.com/the-origins-and-history-of-gift-giving/>.

influences that have had a strong impact on the flourishing concept of giving, which include religion, academia, and the Civil War.⁷³

The religious roots of American philanthropy are particularly strong. Religious leaders encouraged their congregations toward charitable behaviors. And so churches instilled in their members a sense of obligation to help the poor and needy (here and in other lands), and assist victims of natural disasters. For many, though by no means all, religious belief is still an important source of philanthropic endeavor.⁷⁴

In 1643, volunteers from Harvard were considered begging when they conducted the first fund drive, yet they raised 500 pounds and the drive was considered a “great success.”⁷⁵ Benjamin Franklin was a notable philanthropist and displayed good works “for the public welfare” by making donations to improve his community. Donations from Franklin included gifts to the fire company, the Pennsylvania hospital, the University of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia public library.⁷⁶ Further, the Civil War created an infrastructure of giving based on a diversified group of people from various nationalities and cultures, due to the tragedies that were experienced at the hands of the war: “...on both sides of the contest, armies of volunteers sold bonds and gathered contributions hoping for resolution.”⁷⁷

These kinds of fundraising efforts introduced a process that, during the great wars of the 20th century helped galvanize the nation while formalizing and

⁷³ “Brief History of Researching Philanthropy,” East Bay Community Foundation, accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁷⁴ “Brief History of Researching Philanthropy,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁷⁵ “Brief History of Researching Philanthropy,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁷⁶ “Brief History of Researching Philanthropy,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁷⁷ “Brief History of Researching Philanthropy,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

popularizing charity as fundamental to the American social conscience. And ultimately, the income tax Abraham Lincoln instituted to finance the Union's preservation grew to such an extent that exemptions from it now encourage charity—particularly among the wealthy.⁷⁸

Philanthropic efforts during the Civil War provided supplies and services to the troops, helped build morale among civilians, and provided opportunities for women to organize aid societies to help soldiers and their families. Religious organizations in the North and South endeavored to supply the troops with moral instruction and spiritual care.⁷⁹

Andrew Carnegie was one of the most successful philanthropists in the United States. Carnegie strongly believed that, "Individuals 'won' wealth as a result of 'survival of the fittest' through the forces of competition. With that wealth, he believed, came the obligations of being an agent of civilization. And so philanthropy became a tool for improving civilization."⁸⁰ Carnegie's reforms were focused on public libraries, which exceed more than 2,000, universities, and corporations.⁸¹ Another cause that Carnegie promoted was world peace, and a demonstration of his support was made when he established the "Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and funded the building of the Hague Palace of Peace which houses the World Court in the Netherlands."⁸²

⁷⁸ "Brief History of Researching Philanthropy," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁷⁹ Zimmer, "Philanthropy," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.learningtogive.org/resources/philanthropy/>.

⁸⁰ "Brief History of Researching Philanthropy," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁸¹ "Andrew Carnegie, Philanthropist," America's Story from America's Library, accessed February 28, 2016, http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/carnegie/aa_carnegie_phil_3.html.

⁸² "Andrew Carnegie, Philanthropist," accessed February 28, 2016, http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/carnegie/aa_carnegie_phil_3.html.

Andrew Carnegie's giving history paved the way for John Rockefeller to give generously and to create opportunities of employment to manage his philanthropic enterprise.⁸³ With the structured giving model of the early twentieth century, other civic and business leaders followed the corporate giving models of Carnegie and Rockefeller. The new structure provided flexibility, charitable trusts, and foundations; all of which assisted in resolving the root cause of poverty, hunger and disease.⁸⁴ The overarching goal was to utilize the scientific instrument of giving as opposed to directly assisting people.⁸⁵ Within the current culture, the concept of giving has become a common notion that is embraced by all of America on various levels. "Today, there are probably close to 1 million charitable tax-exempt organizations, employing full-time staff by the tens of millions, generating trillions in charitable assets and supported by the charity of over 100,000 private foundations and the volunteer efforts of more than 90 percent of our adult population."⁸⁶ In the nineteenth century, the categories of slavery and education became important within the area of philanthropy. In the 1820s, the American Colonization Society founded a colony for free African Americans in Liberia, Africa. The issue of slavery was somewhat risqué because of the uncertainty of the benefit of investing in slavery and whether it would hurt or harm African Americans.⁸⁷ The

⁸³ "Brief History of Researching Philanthropy," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁸⁴ "Brief History of Researching Philanthropy," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁸⁵ "Brief History of Researching Philanthropy," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁸⁶ "Brief History of Researching Philanthropy," accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.

⁸⁷ Robert H. Bremmer, *American Philanthropy* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1988).

controversy was surrounded by the fact that “no one could predict the effect the colony would have on slavery in the United States, which was supported by some and opposed by others. Before the middle of the 19th century, few people or organizations dared take a public stance against slavery.”⁸⁸ However, providing free education to poor children became a priority for many philanthropists. This type of support from philanthropists was needed because there were so many colleges and schools that the government could not afford to fund all of them.⁸⁹

In the 1930s, when the country experienced the Great Depression, the pendulum began to shift from philanthropy to charity because of the need to meet the immediate needs of communities. “Wealthy industrialists allowed the poor to use warehouses for shelter and other wealthy people provided funding for bread lines. Though short on financial resources, local community chests relied on donations from members of the public and the American Red Cross worked to relieve the suffering of the poor.”⁹⁰ As a result of the Great Depression, philanthropy shifted once again; the focus was no longer on the sentimentality of giving, and the public became suspicious of the philanthropists’ motives.⁹¹ “Some believed philanthropists gave only to increase their own power and status and their money should not be accepted by institutions.”⁹² The events of the World Wars encouraged Americans to become more focused and centered on giving in a philanthropic manner. The interest in giving was once again centered on supporting

⁸⁸ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 103.

⁸⁹ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 103.

⁹⁰ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 103.

⁹¹ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 103.

⁹² Bremmer, *American Philanthropy* 103.

relief efforts; however, with the World Wars, the efforts were external to the United States borders.⁹³ Following World War II, “President Roosevelt recognized a need to coordinate the efforts of the thousands of war-related philanthropic agencies. He organized the President's War Relief Control Board to oversee and manage war-related philanthropy. President Roosevelt's plan emphasized the importance of coordination, efficiency and oversight in philanthropy.”⁹⁴ Post-war, one of the main privileges of philanthropy was the tax exemption. However, certain restrictions ultimately enforced taxation due to the obvious attraction of the wealthy to tax exemption privileges.⁹⁵ Restrictions were enforced to alleviate abuse of foundation assets, as a foundation could lose its tax-exempt status if its activity was deemed to have the purpose of accumulating wealth.⁹⁶ In the 1950s, philanthropy shifted back to suspicion, and the public no longer trusted the government and felt philanthropist dollars were being misused.

The 1960s and 1970s were a time of increased public-private partnership. The public no longer trusted the government's ability to solve social problems. People began to look to private organizations and philanthropy to solve these problems. State and local governments bought the services of private organizations, providing them with needed funding for their activities.⁹⁷

The concept of giving not only exists in the United States, but it is deeply embedded within the histories of other cultures and countries as well. Chinese history recorded the first instance of the giving concept over 4,000 years ago. Hebrews gave one tenth of their tithes to God, and tithing continues in many religions today. In the Ancient Egyptian

⁹³ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 103.

⁹⁴ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 107-125.

⁹⁵ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 107-125.

⁹⁶ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 107-125.

⁹⁷ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 107-125.

culture, rulers and nobles gave to the poor in an “effort to please the gods and to help ensure a happy afterlife.”⁹⁸ Most of the giving history is rooted in the religious sector. For example, giving and or philanthropy can be found in the Koran, Bible, and Torah. There are also teachings of giving in other religions and cultures such as Buddhism, Japanese and Native American cultures, Hinduism, and Islam.⁹⁹ According to the Bible, giving is a way to honor the sacredness of each individual, as in the book of Matthew, when God says, “...Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Matthew 25: 40). “In the Jewish tradition, there are eight levels of charity. The highest level is helping someone to become self-sufficient, which is the definition of true philanthropy.”¹⁰⁰

According to Robert Bremmer, religious beliefs on the concept of giving have historically influenced the level at and way to which people give. The religious institution assists in developing a good and moral consciousness of giving, which creates the importance and impact of giving.¹⁰¹ Bremmer notes that the first philanthropists in America were the Native Americans. Philanthropy was displayed when the Europeans arrived and the Native Americans provided them with materials and knowledge as it relates to survival.¹⁰² The philanthropic efforts were well received by the Europeans

⁹⁸ Zimmer, “Philanthropy,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.learningtogive.org/resources/philanthropy>.

⁹⁹ Zimmer, “Philanthropy,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.learningtogive.org/resources/philanthropy>.

¹⁰⁰ Hershey H. Friedman, “The Simple Life: The Case Against Ostentation in Jewish Law,” accessed February 26, 2016, <http://www.jlaw.com/Articles/againstosten.html>.

¹⁰¹ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 107-125.

¹⁰² Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 20.

because they viewed it as an opportunity to convert the Native Americans to Christianity.¹⁰³

Until the middle of the 19th century, philanthropy in the United States was focused on religion and morality. During the first half of the 18th century, the American colonies experienced a social movement called the "Great Awakening." The Great Awakening was fueled by religious revivals and focused on the importance of individualism in religion. Church-based philanthropy continued to grow.¹⁰⁴

In observing the historical perspective of giving, it is clear that the generosity of giving is deeply rooted within the church. Christians are expected to give of the ten percent called tithing, but the greater expectation is to give with a generous heart to the Creator who has generously given all things to humanity. When Christians give from a generous heart, there will be sufficient resources to provide within the church as well as the community. Therefore, the work of the Lord can continue and the community will be vibrant because it will provide to those who are less fortunate and have been marginalized by the challenges and oppression of the world.

¹⁰³ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 20.

¹⁰⁴ Bremmer, *American Philanthropy*, 20.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

The theological view of generously giving is being explored because it provides a standard paradigm in which to balance the concept of giving. People, businesses, organizations and churches have traditionally given to support causes and campaigns, and it is relevant to gain insight regarding the rationale behind the gift as well as the giver. From the biblical lens, we have examined that generous giving supports the notion that Christians receive from a generous God. Therefore, we should reciprocate the generosity that we have received, which will spill into the community and provide to those who may be less fortunate and have been marginalized by society. Further, the historical roots of giving run deep into the terrain of the American culture, as well as other cultures. In continuing to build the argument of generous giving, this chapter will dig into the theological concept behind giving and flush out rationales as the results of generous giving from a theological perspective, according to John Wesley and practical theology.

John Wesley, the British Anglican preacher and the founder of Methodism, believed that theology and ethics were so intertwined that the two have been coined a “practical divinity.” “Wesley understood theology to be intimately related to Christian living and the proclamation of Christian faith. He had little interest in theology for its

own sake. Rather, theology was for the purpose of transforming personal life and social relations.”¹ John Wesley has been widely known and quoted throughout history for his wisdom and the gain all you can concept: “Save all you can,” and “Give all you can.”² The “gain concept” was both internal and external to an individual, and Wesley tied it all back to the ability to work, live and gain all with the intention of gaining more to give back and help others. Therefore his life was a reflection of motifs such as gain all you can by utilizing common sense, which in turn would help the person, and the common sense factor would allow the person to be a blessing to someone else. The motif of education was consistently promoted because people were encouraged to gain all they could by continually learning. Wesley believed that education was the key to getting a better understanding in all areas, which in turn would increase the financial status in life. The wealth was not to be squandered, but saved, which yielded to save all you can.

The concept of saving did not only apply to gaining and acquiring, but Wesley also believed in saving by protecting what was given by God. Therefore, he encouraged congregants not to throw their precious talents into the sea of idleness. Further, they were encouraged not to waste the gift of money on gratifying the desires of the flesh, but to be content with plain nature. Parishioners were encouraged not to waste money by gratifying the eye with expensive apparels. The concept applied to individuals purchasing expensive gifts for themselves as well as for others. Wesley believed that the more one indulged in feeding desires of gratification, the more the desire would be embraced. One should not spend money on prideful things in order to gain the admiration of others.

¹ Randy L. Maddox, *Rethinking Wesley's Theology for Contemporary Methodism* (Nashville, TN: Kings Wood Books, 1998), 35.

² Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater, *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 347.

The gain concept, according to Wesley, was all-inclusive, and he felt it should be applied to everyone, including children. Wesley felt that children should be raised in the spirit of love, but not spoiled or over laden with gifts and possessions. Therefore, he encouraged congregants not to throw away more on their children than they would on themselves. Further, Wesley did not support the cause of gaining great wealth, saving it and leaving it for the children. His belief rested on the fact that children may not value the wealth and throw it away frivolously. However, Wesley encouraged people to leave the bulk of the money to the child who values money and would continue to use it to promote others by giving to support those who were in need. Wesley believed the child could be trusted with the increase if he or she would continue to live in the same manner they were accustomed.

Although the concepts, beliefs and practices of Wesley were viewed by some as harsh and extreme, everything that he promoted was rooted in love. He promoted the concept of gaining all you can, but not to others' detriment. People were encouraged to gain, but not by hurting others or affecting their spiritual walk with the Lord. Parishioners were encouraged to gain, but from a place of honesty and integrity that would promote and stimulate growth and the betterment of all people. In addition to operating in love, he also incorporated grace by encouraging others to do better today than they did yesterday. There was always room for improvement, growth and forgiveness.

Ultimately, he wanted others to realize and embrace that all of the wealth and possessions belonged to God. God has simply trusted us to be faithful and wise stewards over the blessings that He has afforded. Due to the fact that God has given to humanity,

the expectation is to provide for self in moderate terms to preserve the body and gain health and strength, provide for the household including the spouse, children, servants and house, and use the surplus to do good towards all people. This method of giving allows you to “render unto God the things that are God’s.”

It is Wesley’s most cogent summary of his insights on money, stewardship and economics. He had preached on the Luke 16:9 scripture verse at least twenty-seven times using the title “The Mammon of Unrighteousness.”³ “John Wesley preached a lot about money. And with probably one of the highest incomes in England [at that time], he had ample opportunity to put his ideas into practice.”⁴ Wesley extravagantly practiced what he preached. His theology matched his personal praxis, which he would see as simply what is expected of a Christian lifestyle. The hallmark of stewardship for John Wesley was that Christians ought to earn and save as much as they are able to in order to give away as much as they can for the common good of society. In other words, Christians are expected to practice generous giving to those in the greatest need, the poor.

This is particularly noteworthy, knowing that John Wesley grew up in abject poverty. He was the son of an Anglican priest, Samuel Wesley, and a devoted mother, Susanna Wesley. He was one of nine children raised in one of England’s poorest and lowest-paying parishes. In fact, on one occasion, due to the low wages and inability of his father to pay the families expenses, John had to suffer the indignity of watching his father arrested and taken to debtor’s prison. It can be hypothesized that his being raised in poverty was foundational for his later ministry’s emphasis on social services and caring

³ Outler and Heitzenrater, *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 347.

⁴ Charles Edward White, *The Economic Ethics of John Wesley* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1987), 27.

for the poor. Wesley was also shaped in the crucible of a fast growing industrial complex that made it easy for some to become wealthy, but many more to become poor. With many being poor, the social conditions deteriorated very quickly and there was a great need for some hope. Wesley's later aid societies would serve some of the burgeoning social needs that were developing. There was also much political shifting taking place in the eighteenth century that added to the challenges England was already facing. These political shifts caused great concern on the economics of that day. Later in Wesley's life, as a preacher, he would speak to the economic and social conditions of that day and call for social justice in the affairs of the state.

John Wesley had been classically trained to be a professor and scholar and was a well-paid one at that. It was most likely a shock to John that he would be called to the same vocation as his father, but not to the same poverty. John, who was taught to read at an early age by his mother and encouraged to pursue his education, would do so and ultimately teach at Oxford University. Wesley would earn a handsome salary for a single person, which he initially spent frivolously at times.⁵ There was a pivotal event that would change Wesley's whole ideology on money.

While at Oxford, an incident changed his perspective on money. He had just finished paying for some pictures for his room when one of the chambermaids came to his door. It was a cold winter day and he noticed that she had nothing to protect her except a thin linen gown. He reached into his pocket to give her some money to buy a coat but found he had too little left. Immediately, the thought struck him that the Lord was not pleased with the way he had spent his money. He asked himself, "Will thy

⁵ Charles Edward White, *The Economic Ethics of John Wesley* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1987), 27.

Master say, ‘Well done, good and faithful steward?’ Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money, which might have screened this poor creature from the cold! O justice! O mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid?’”⁶ Wesley had a new found purpose for the use of his money to help those in need and to “count the cost” of how he used his money in order to be found a faithful steward and in good favor with God. In fact, it could be postulated that this incident led to Wesley living a frugal life.

John Wesley believed one needed to lead a life of spiritual discipline with mutual accountability to the community of faith, and to continue one’s learning for spiritual growth and development. As a guide to Christian life, Wesley would live his life by three simple rules: “Do No Harm, Do Good, [and] Stay in Love with God.”⁷ Wesley would come to understand one could do harm or good by how they used their money and would call all Christians to faithful stewardship as a way of life.

For Wesley, stewardship was a spiritual discipline that one needed to practice. Stewardship was one of the ways Christians moved on “towards Christian perfection, which Wesley also called entire sanctification.”⁸ Wesley believed a Christian needed to be a disciplined steward in all areas of their life, including their money. Wesley defines stewardship in the context of his “The Use of Money” sermon, where he writes:

[He] is not at liberty to use what is lodged in his hands as he pleases, but as his Master pleases. He has no right to dispose of anything which is in his hands, but according to the will of his Lord. For he is not Proprietor of any of these things, but barely entrusted on this express condition,—that he shall dispose of all as his Master orders. Now, this is exactly the case of every man, with relation to God.

⁶ White, *The Economic Ethics of John Wesley*, 27.

⁷ Rueben P. Job, *Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007).

⁸ Gary L. Ball-Kilbourne, “The Christian as Steward in John Wesley’s Theological Ethics,” *Quarterly Review* 4, no. 1(Spring 1984): 43.

We are not at liberty to use what he has lodged in our hands as we please, but as [God] pleases who alone is possessor of heaven and earth, and the Lord of every creature. We have no right to dispose of anything we have, but according to his will, seeing we are not proprietors of any of these things.⁹

Thus, Christian stewards are not the owners of the resources they possess, just the managers of the proprietor's possessions. For Wesley, God is the creator and thus, the proprietor or owner of all creation. Humans are not the creators of any of creation, just subjects of God's creation with whom God has entrusted a portion of the creation and its resources to manage for God. Therefore, stewards are under orders from God in the use of God's possessions. A steward has no right to utilize anything according to their will, only the will of God. It is through this sermon that Wesley then painstakingly argues the dangers of money, the appropriate and inappropriate uses of money and the blessings that come from money's proper use.

It is important to note that Wesley discerned that one of the fallacies of the history of the Christian church is that we usually leave the discussion of money to the secular world. In Wesley's sermon "The Use of Money," he quotes Luke 16:8, "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Wesley makes the case that worldly or non-Christians make better use of their money than Christians, because they are shrewder. The logic of Wesley's argument is in line with Jesus's own teaching in the parable of the shrewd steward.¹⁰

⁹ John Wesley, *The Use of Money*, Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.umcmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons/Sermon-50-The-Use-of-Money>.

¹⁰ Wesley, *The Use of Money*, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.umcmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons/Sermon-50-The-Use-of-Money>.

John believed one had to be a steward in one's work and with one's wages. He had no problem with people making a good living. He believed people ought to work to make as much money as they could. His concern was that people needed to work in fulfilling, but safe occupations, so as to be faithful stewards over their bodies. John believed people needed to use their earned wages in meaningful ways and not frivolously, as he had once done in his own life. He moved from living frivolously to living frugal. John believed one needed to be careful in how they gained their wages. He felt one needed to be clear on their purpose in working and not work to their own detriment. One needed to understand the purpose of life was to work in order to provide for one's self and family, and to be better able to help society by giving to needy causes and those in need.

Wesley understood work was designed to help provide for one's self and family without sacrificing one's life and health. Further, he believed one should not work one's self into bad health or death (both physically and spiritually). He would, in fact, urge people to not work in certain occupations because of the dangerous environment that could destroy one's personhood. Wesley cautioned people not to over work themselves with long, exhausting hours, which could result in their demise or death. One needed to work where they would have ample time for breaks for food, and not to work the many hours that would prevent ample rest and sleep. Being a good steward over your body would also include caring for the basic necessities of life (i.e. food, clothing, shelter) as well as the important non-tangible necessities of life (i.e. rest, health and peace with God). He had the theological understanding that one had to have the principle of the

stewardship in all areas of life and living. People needed to be faithful stewards of God by taking care of themselves so that they would be fit to be used by God.

John encouraged people to “Gain all [they] can... without paying more for it than it is worth.”¹¹ John Wesley believed one needed to become a “smart shopper,” by knowing the value of things so that one would not overpay for them. By not overpaying for things, that would allow the money in their hands to be used faithfully for other needful purposes and ultimately, for important things in life. Wesley did not only preach the concept of being a good steward, but he espoused a careful stewardship over what he had gained or possessed in life, because he did not want to frivolously squander that which belonged to God. For John, all of life was sacred. What one gained or possessed in life was a sacred obligation to be carefully handled in its usages. In fact, John was known to utter a prayer before procuring any goods.

For John Wesley, prayer was an act of worship to God and spiritual discipline to be practiced regularly. The prayer was also used as a part of his way to spiritually discern what God would have him to do in regards to his stewardship obligations. He wanted to know the will of God in all areas of his stewardship, even the mundane realities of what he should and should not purchase. He is known to have prayed and encouraged others to pray the following prayer before making a purchase:

Lord, thou seest I am going to expend this sum on that food, apparel, [or] furniture. And thou knowest I act therein with a single eye, as a steward of thy goods, expending this portion of them thus, in pursuance of the design thou hadst in entrusting me with them. Thou knowest I do this in obedience to thy word, as thou commandest, and because thou commandest it. Let this, I beseech thee, be an holy sacrifice, acceptable through Jesus Christ! And give me a witness in

¹¹ Wesley, *The Use of Money*, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.umcmmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons/Sermon-50-The-Use-of-Money>.

myself, that for this labor of love I shall have a recompense when thou rewardest every man according to his works.¹²

Wesley's frugality was not simply to be able to amass more money, but to be poised to be able to do more helpful things with one's money such as caring for the poor and needy.

Wesley wrote, "Gain all that we can without hurting the mind any more than our body; do not lose your souls in the gain of money."¹³ He knew that money in and of itself was harmless, but he also knew too often people's inordinate attachment to money could lead to endangering one's mind, body and or soul. John believed money could pre-occupy the mind to a person's detriment. The consistent, persistent thought of money tends to lead one to worry about its implications for the future. One can easily become consumed by and attached to money and the process of gaining it. In doing so, it can become the security in which people place their trust and alleviate the ability to trust in God. Although Wesley knew money was a means to helping one meet the normal necessities of life and could help one prosper in life, he did not put his trust in money to secure his future. Wesley espoused deeply the New Testament's love ethic where one is to gain all that you can without hurting your neighbor. In viewing the beliefs and practices of John Wesley, the model is consistent with Practical theology, which emerged tremendously since the eighteenth century. Practical theology is no longer solely centered on the "rules of art" for Christian life of ministry, as initially developed by Friedrich Schleiermacher.¹⁴ Practical theology now revolves more around the concept of

¹² Charles Edward White, *The Economic Ethics of John Wesley* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1987), 29.

¹³ Wesley, *The Use of Money*, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.umcmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons/Sermon-50-The-Use-of-Money>.

¹⁴ Gerben Heitink, *Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 2.

dealing with real life issues presented in the world and the church. Further, it provides ways to comprehend theological doctrine as well as ways to apply doctrine in everyday Christian life. Practical theology is expected to equip future Christian leaders with a theological stance, the necessary skill set to ensure success, and the knowledge base to effectively minister in the modern world as it relates to all aspects of Christianity, including the art of giving.

In evaluating Luther's ethics on divine giving he relates it to two forms including grace and gift.¹⁵ Luther believed that giving was a core part of God's liberty as God, as God being God.¹⁶ Paul Althaus indicates that Luther introduces three separate elements of the gift. The gift is the indication that man is made, "Essentially righteous: justification of the sinner, forgiveness of sin, and God's free giving of Christ and his righteousness, imputed to humanity."¹⁷

The three elements of the Christological gift according to Luther is relationship (justification), attitude (the paths of forgiveness) and the gift (alien righteousness).¹⁸ In looking at these elements, they provide create insight on God's method of giving as well as provides insight as to the methodology that humanity should use to give to others.¹⁹ Luther further argues that as Christians we are expected to follow His examples of giving. Christians are further expected to give in service to their neighbors, just as Christ

¹⁵ Eric Worringer, "Luther's Christological Giving and the Welfare State" (master thesis, Luther Seminary, 2014), 20.

¹⁶ Worringer, "Luther's Christological Giving," 20.

¹⁷ Paul Althaus, *The Theology of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia, PA Fortress Press, 1966), 226.

¹⁸ Worringer, "Luther's Christological Giving," 22.

¹⁹ Worringer, "Luther's Christological Giving," 22.

gave himself for humanity.²⁰ Due to Martin's concern for the poor and the belief to follow the model of Christ, he believed that in dealing with the welfare of our neighbors, the need did not consist of another stewardship campaign or a sermon on social justice. Instead, "A renewal of a theology of giving that finds its model in the christological giving, and is lived out in the life of the community."²¹

Devote all the remaining property to the common fund of a common chest, out of which gifts and loans could be made in Christian love to all the needy in the land, be they noble or commoners...Now there is no greater service of God than Christian love, which helps and serves the needy, as Christ himself will judge and testify at the Last day. This is why the possessions of the church were formerly called *bona ecclesiae*, that is, common property, a common chest, as it were, for all who were needed among the Christians.²²

Luther further believed that churches would give to their local neighbors, which would result in established relationship with those who receive the gifts from God.²³ Secondly, Luther posits that this metric of giving should shift the attitudes towards welfare for both the recipient and the giver.²⁴ The recipient would not develop a sense of entitlement and dependence but would develop an attitude of appreciation and freedom that would assist in deliverance from poverty.²⁵ For the giver, it would develop a sense of grace towards those in poverty and help the giver to develop a desire for "structural

²⁰ Timothy Lull, *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*, 107.

²¹ Worringer, "Luther's Christological Giving," 22.

²² Samuel Torven, *Hungry Poor: Gathered Fragments* (Minneapolis, MN Fortress Press, 2008), 20.

²³ Worringer, "Luther's Christological Giving," 22.

²⁴ Worringer, "Luther's Christological Giving," 22.

²⁵ Worringer, "Luther's Christological Giving," 22.

justice regardless of political philosophy.”²⁶ Thirdly, Luther felt that by giving to the needy was a form of evangelization and stewardship.”²⁷ This belief goes back to the concept mentioned earlier in that humanity should give because we have received from Christ. By giving allows humanity to alleviate other issues related to poverty and bondage.²⁸ Overall Luther’s concept on giving was impressive at best. His overall concept on giving was simple and also took to heart those who were in need. Barbara Owens provides an overview in *Martin Luther’s Thoughts About Money*. She believed that Christian should be putting money to work helping the needy, investing in education and putting money to work in God’s plan for salvation.²⁹

Friedrich Schleiermacher identified practical theology as being focused on a process, which consisted of church guidance, church governance and church service.³⁰ According to Schleiermacher, church service consisted of edification, assemblage and governance, which were critically important.³¹ The importance within the act of edifying was associated with the system of worship, assemblage awakened a sense of consciousness and governance regulated morals and influence within individuals.³² Although Schleiermacher believed in the process and practicality of governance, he remained sensitive to the Holy Spirit and viewed it as the highest expression.

²⁶ Worringer, “Luther’s Christological Giving,” 22..

²⁷ Worringer, “Luther’s Christological Giving,” 22..

²⁸ Worringer, “Luther’s Christological Giving,” 22.

²⁹ Barbara Owen, *Martin Luther Thoughts About Money* (Annapolis, MD, 1999).

³⁰ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology* (Edinburgh, UK: T & T Clark, 1875), 196.

³¹ Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, 196.

³² Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, 196.

Heitink considered “practical theology as a theory of action” related to the changing views in the 1960’s regarding problems of theology.³³ He identified practical theology as “theological reflection that was grounded in the life of the church, society, and the individual and that both critically recovers the theology of the past and constructively develops theology of the future.”³⁴ Osmer felt that practical theology prepared Christian leaders to effectively lead in life or death situations. According to Schleiermacher, Heitink and Osmer, practical theology was centered on being concerned about the welfare of the church, a scientific spirit and the ability to effectively problem solve to prevent unmanageable challenges.

Schleiermacher indicated that the ability to problem solve yielded to church guidance. Pastoral care was an example of church guidance because it served as a “guiding activity producing an effect that is common” to all members, which meant it created a special relationship between the pastor and the congregants.³⁵ Schleiermacher argued that, despite the fact that congregational activity may differ, the theological perspective should be the same for all, which assisted in the functionality of church-government. In doing so, church-government addressed the problems from a holistic perspective as opposed to through a one-sided lens.³⁶ Church government was expected to build relationships between Ecclesiastical Government and the congregation, which identified the guidelines of operation by exclusion or suggestion between the two

³³ Gerben Heitink, *Practical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 2.

³⁴ Gerben Heitink, *Practical Theology*, 2.

³⁵ Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, 200-203.

³⁶ Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, 207.

parties.³⁷ Therefore, church government was a process to determine the activity the congregations were expected to adhere to and uphold.³⁸

Schleiermacher further added that practical theology utilized “general expressions” which were not centered on individual cases, but operated on “rules of art” on a case-by-case situation or circumstance.³⁹ In order to effectively operate within “general expressions,” Schleiermacher believed that a theologian, pastor, or leader must receive guidance from “Him who has the will to be a Practical Theologian.”⁴⁰

Further, we can look at practical theology through the lens of Stephen Covey’s *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, a book which was written on the basis of practicality. The habits consist of being: “proactive” in knowing that something had to be done; starting “with the end in mind”; first things first; “win-win” situation; “sought to understand before being understood,” “with the end in mind”; “synergy”; and “sharpen the saw.”⁴¹ When leaders approach pastoring churches from these practical habits, it may alleviate church splits from occurring. Of course the alleviation will not occur solely from the usage of practical examples of the habits defined by Covey, but it will when coupled with a strong dependence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Being proactive in activating the Holy Spirit, while having faith that the end will be positive because of the Holy Spirit, and realizing that the first step is to acknowledge God in everything, the result will be positive outcomes. Additionally, when a relationship is established between

³⁷ Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, 206.

³⁸ Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, 207.

³⁹ Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, 190.

⁴⁰ Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, 190.

⁴¹ Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1989), 63.

pulpit and pew, and the word of God is consistently preached by helping to inform sisters and brothers that they are accountable to each other by showing love, these are the final components that will assist in alleviating church splits.

Based on the beliefs of John Wesley and the concepts of practical theology, there are results that emerge from the utilization of these theological beliefs and the implementation within the Christian experience. The Apostle Paul helps us to gain a better insight within his writings to the Corinthians. Paul informs his Christian sisters and brothers that they will reap as a result of their generous giving. "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously," (2 Corinthians 9:6). This concept is not foreign within biblical context because Jesus used similar language, "Give and it will be given to you...", (Luke 6:38). Although Jesus was not specifically referring to giving of gifts, finances, or funds, the concept is still the same.

Christians are encouraged to give, but not solely on the expectations of what will come back to them. However, there are specific results when an individual extends a gift through tithing or giving generously, outside of the expected ten percent. The results are rooted in three specific principles that Paul raises in the 2 Corinthians 9:6-15. The first principle is that the giver must give from a position of individuality within the confines of their heart. The amount of the gift speaks to the intimacy and personal relationship in the heart. There is no comparison as it relates to how much someone else is or is not giving. Instead, the gift is given out of love and is a reflection of the love, appreciation and gratitude of the sovereign God that we serve. As a result of the intimate relationship, the person makes the decision to intentionally give, which is a reflection of the mental

acumen in the decision making process. When making generous contributions, Paul indicates that the process requires deliberate, intentional, calculated choices to give to God with the understanding that God owns everything.

The second principle of deliberate giving is never made from impulse or competition, but it is an act that is focused on the love for the Lord for His consistent generous giving to humanity. The final principle is to give out of a place of privacy and not for outward show or for acknowledgement in the public domain. Paul encourages individuals to give out of a private place and allow God to openly reward. In making contributions from these following four principles, Paul continues to shed light on the benefits of giving and he identifies four recipients within the text: the giver (v. 8-11), the recipient (v.12), God (v. 11-12) and the church (v. 13-14). Paul indicates that the giver benefits through the abounding grace of Christ Jesus. The benefits of God's grace could be physical, spiritual or natural in content. The text does not specify; however, regardless of the application, God's grace is always sufficient and necessary within the life of a Believer. Further, God's grace has no limitations or boundaries to operate. The recipient benefits from the service that has been extended by the hands of the giver. In the text, the giver provided resources because there was a lack within the community. Therefore, the giver assisted in alleviating a specific deficit of basic need. The third beneficiary is God due to the praise that is rendered in His name from the recipients. When looking at the act of giving from the perspective that man was made to glorify God and in all things we should give thanks, we gain greater insight in knowing that the recipient is to return praise to God because all things belong to Him. The act of generous giving is cyclical. God gives to humanity. Humanity gives to God by acknowledging Him and giving to

others, just as He has given unto us. Recipients give praise because He is sovereign and has provided for the lack. Therefore, the recipients praise out of obedience and out of thankful hearts for those who gave generously. Finally, the church benefits from generous giving because it provides an avenue for individuals to continue to adhere to the disciplines and ordinance of God through prayer and grace (v. 14).

CHAPTER FIVE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

In examining the theory of giving it is important to view the rationale behind why people give. The concept of generous giving can be explored from corporate America, academia, small business as well as the church. Individuals give for multiple reasons and there are many factors that encourage or discourage giving. For example, people give out of obligation, while others give out of good intentions or from an altruistic perspective. As a result of the multiple theories associated with generous giving, various marketing strategies are shaped to motivate individuals to give. These strategies are effective in the marketplace and can also be effective within the religious setting, if embraced and coupled with the fact that Jesus has generously given to each of us. Therefore, within this chapter, we evaluate the theory of generous giving to gain better insight of the methodologies used to encourage giving. However, the theories utilized will be evaluated from a theological perspective as it relates to the biblical paradigm of generous giving set by Jesus.

This chapter will use Notre Dame's Center for the Study and Religion in Society as the foundation which highlights their vision of generosity as “the disposition and practice of giving of one’s financial resources, time, and talents (including, for example, charitable financial giving, volunteering, and the dedication of one's gifts for the welfare

of others and the common good.”¹ While we will include some psychological reflections and analyses, we are discussing generosity and giving as distinct from mere pro-social behavior as seen by many psychologists in their line of inquiry and their research leading to their own theoretical conceptualization. In other words, we will speak of generosity as the quality of being "generous" or being willing to share and give, not being selfish and can be seen as one who is forgiving, kind-spirited, magnanimous.

A few terms characteristically associated with generosity and giving as prosocial behavior come to mind immediately and must be clarified as to their use in the continued discussion. The first is altruism, a term so very often prevalent in social psychological work. Altruism means an act done by one to intentionally help another without any benefit for the actor, and perhaps may even be done at a cost to the one who performs.²

The second term, which is so often confused with altruism is the term helping. Helping is any act that one does to assist another regardless of whether the one helps benefits from the act or not. Thus, helping does not serve as the precondition of the definition of altruism. As stated by Jessica L. Collett and Christopher Morrissey in their enlightening piece in October, 2007 entitled *"The Social Psychology of Generosity: The State of Current Interdisciplinary Research"* "altruism is the tenet that the helper must not benefit from the altruistic act, helping lacks a similar precondition."³ Their example of a charitable contribution makes the distinction very clear: If one makes a charitable

¹ Jessica L. Collett and Christopher A. Morrissey, "The Social Psychology of Generosity: The State of Current Interdisciplinary Research," *Science of Generosity* (October 2007).

² Roberta G. Simmons, "Presidential Address on Altruism and Sociology," *The Sociological Quarterly* 32:1-22.

³ Collett and Morrissey, "The Social Psychology of Generosity," *Science of Generosity* (October 2007).

contribution and receives tax deduction or public recognition for the contribution in return, it is no longer an altruistic act, although it may be considered as a helping act, but not an altruistic one. While all attempted acts of altruism may be considered helping, all acts of helping are not altruistic.⁴

Often these two categories are enmeshed as egoistically motivated giving (seen as the giver receiving personal benefits) and seen as helping others while perhaps even receiving some benefits from the act as the motivation. However, Batson, Oleson, Weeks, and others in a study in 1989, "Religious Prosocial Motivation: Is it Altruistic or Egoistic?"⁵ in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, note that there is both altruistically and egoistically motivated altruism, and both describe an individual sacrificing something for another. In a detailed and critically and carefully written documentation they point out that,

To the degree that helping is directed toward the ultimate goal of enhancing the other's welfare, as presumably was the Good Samaritan's, it can be said to be *altruistically* motivated. To the degree that helping is directed toward the ultimate goal of enhancing the helper's own welfare, either through providing rewards (e.g., self-esteem, a star in one's crown), or avoiding punishments (e.g., guilt, hellfire), it can be said to be *egoistically* motivated.⁶

When speaking of altruism and charitable giving one cannot help but include philanthropy. Although it has many meanings, which John Van Til points out in a comprehensive study, "Defining Philanthropy," published in *Critical Issues in American Philanthropy*, the word is usually used to refer to large monetary donations by individuals

⁴ Collett and Morrissey, "The Social Psychology of Generosity," 7.

⁵ C. Daniel Batson et al., "Religious Prosocial Motivation: Is it Altruistic or Egoistic?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 57 (1989): 873-884.

⁶ C. Daniel Batson et al., "Religious Prosocial Motivation?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 57 (1989): 873-884.

or organizations.⁷ The term, however, also may include (and sometimes does connote) more small-scale giving such as churches and religious organizations where parishioners are encouraged to donate a small percentage (usually the tithe of 10%) of their income to charity or to the church. Researchers have found that this type of philanthropy ["generous giving"] as practiced by Americans exceeds all other types of philanthropy combined.⁸

In researching the term charitable giving, extensive research has been conducted. Michael Durall defines, charitable giving as "An expression of faith and the religious life, not paying the church's bills."⁹ Durall believes that giving at the charitable level creates true stewardship because there is an immersion of joy from the individual. Joy stems from the ability to adequately share with others and improve their experience or quality of life. In 1999 Bekkers and Wiepking did a detailed review of theories and research on charitable giving over the previous fifty years. They make use of research from various fields including sociology, economics, social psychology and marketing. They arrived at the previously stated conclusion above.¹⁰ Even more recent research of philanthropic giving, often referred to as the "giving culture" with researchers such as Karen Wright, find that giving in the United States is more common than in the United Kingdom, and she contends in her interesting argument that it is because giving is "heavily interlaced"

⁷ Jon Van Til, "Defining Philanthropy," *Critical Issues in American Philanthropy: Strengthening Theory and Practice* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1990), 19-38.

⁸ David M. Van Slyke and Arthur C. Brooks, "Why Do People Give? New Evidence and Strategies for Nonprofit Managers," *American Review of Public Administration* 35 (2005):199-222.

⁹ Michael Durall, *Beyond the Collection Plate: Overcoming Obstacles to Faithful Giving* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2008), 44.

¹⁰ René Bekkers and Pamala Wiepking, "Understanding Philanthropy: A Review of 50 Years of Theory and Research," *In Progress*, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.fss.uu.nl/soc/homes/bekkers/understanding>.

with self-interest.¹¹ When individuals feel that they have something to gain by offering assistance, they are even more likely to do so. This contention is buttressed by the fact in the United States that in such giving one may well receive tax credits and deductions, benefits from the charity to which one has given, and even increased social status. To make it even more palatable, these types of benefits are socially approved, and, as several sociological studies and survey have shown.¹² *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Non-Profit Organizations* is approved and accepted in the United States as socially acceptable reasons for giving or "being generous." Thus, philanthropy increases in the United States as far outstripping even our closer allies, United Kingdom, including contributions to churches and religious organizations even exceeding other charitable and philanthropic organizations

In an article written by Lise Vesterlund, he begins his thesis on "*Why Do People Give*" with the bold assertion, "The vast majority of Americans make charitable contributions."¹³ He supports this claim with statistics from 2000 from *Independent Sector*: "90 per cent of U.S. households donated on average \$1,623 to non-profit organizations."¹⁴ He then raises the question which is on the minds of any who would pursue the research and action of this project -- even from a socio-political and psychological perspective along with the theological inquiry: why do so many people give their hard-earned income away? What makes them and motivates them to act in this

¹¹ Karen Wright, "Generosity vs. Altruism: Philanthropy and Charity in the United States and United Kingdom," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 12 (2001): 399-416.

¹² Alfie Kohn, *The Brighter Side of Human Nature* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1992).

¹³ Lise Vesterlund, *Why Do People Give* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 168-190.

¹⁴ Vesterlund, *Why Do People Give*, 168-190.

seemingly altruistic and charitable manner? How can we explain this phenomenon of "generosity" or charitable giving? Considerable research has shown that people who volunteer give one and a half times as much as those who do not.¹⁵ Bekkers and Wiepking have identified seven mechanisms that drive this individual giving.¹⁶ These are important to note and discuss for our further understanding of the nature of the culture of giving and will enhance our overall clarity of charitable giving.

The first mechanism is the awareness of need. That is to say, people are more likely to be generous and respond and give when they realize that there is a need. This mechanism increases in amounts and numbers of responses when there is the perception that the person genuinely deserves and the givers feel that their contribution will actually make a difference. The second mechanism that drives individual giving is solicitation. Bryant, Jeon-Slaughter, Kang and Tax in an article in *The Journal of Consumer Policy* in 2003 report their research in "Participation in Philanthropic Activities: Donating Money and Time." They concluded that, "people seldom make unsolicited contributions."¹⁷ Therefore, giving is increased and contributions made more plentiful when people are made aware of the opportunity to participate in giving.

¹⁵ Arthur H. White, "Patterns of Giving," *Philanthropic Giving* (New York, NY: Oxford University, 1989), 65-71.

¹⁶ René Bekkers and Pamala Wiepking, "Understanding Philanthropy: A Review of 50 Years of Theory and Research," *In Progress*, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.fss.uu.nl/soc/homes/bekkers/understanding>.

¹⁷ W. Keith Bryant et al., "Participation in Philanthropic Activities: Donating Money and Time," *The Journal of Consumer Policy* 26 (2003): 43-73.

The third mechanism that drives individual giving is that people weigh the costs and benefits of helping. Dale T. Miller finds that "charitable giving increases when donors feel that their costs are lessened somehow, or that either they, or a group that they belong to, are receiving a benefit -- however small -- from their giving."¹⁸

The fourth mechanism that drives individual giving as cited by Bekkers and Wiepking is altruism, conceived as "caring about an organization's output," as a motivator for philanthropy.¹⁹ If it seems that an organization lacks the ability to provide for its constituents, individuals might feel compelled to pick up the slack. In the authors' words: "people's contributions are inversely related to the contributions of others."²⁰ However, they go on to point out that "despite this, research shows that a severe cut in government funding to non-profit organizations is not likely, on average, to be made up by donations from private donors."²¹

The fifth driving mechanism for individual giving that these scholars point out is the reputation or social standing -- and this affects charitable giving. Their research and the work of others suggest that there is evidence that social pressure not only affects what someone gives, but also who they give it to, and that publicly observable opportunities for donations are particularly effective. We can certainly relate to this mechanism in the giving in churches as "special days" and "special offerings" are raised or taken. If there is

¹⁸ Dale T. Miller, "The Norm of Self-Interest," *American Psychologist* 54 (1999):1053-1060.

¹⁹ Bekkers and Wiepking, "Understanding Philanthropy," accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.fss.uu.nl/soc/homes/bekkers/understanding>.

²⁰ Bekkers and Wiepking, "Understanding Philanthropy," accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.fss.uu.nl/soc/homes/bekkers/understanding>.

²¹ Bekkers and Wiepking, "Understanding Philanthropy," accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.fss.uu.nl/soc/homes/bekkers/understanding>.

public recognition of the gift or gifts, there they are more likely to be higher. The sixth mechanism driving individual giving is the psychological benefits impact giving. Psychologists point out that individuals give to improve their self-image and mood. Further, research also shows that those with positive self-images and mood are more likely to give. Personal experience as a pastor, a church member and observer, there are sociological and psychological reality demonstrated in the Black churches.

The seventh and eighth mechanisms driving charitable giving are values and efficacy. It has been found that "People who help others through philanthropic and other helping behaviors are more likely to have altruistic, prosocial, postmaterialistic, or caring values and those who feel personal and moral responsibility for the welfare of others," so state Bekkers and Wiepking as their conclusions to the above mentioned study.²² Those people are more likely to give to the charities or organizations that espouse their values; and as for efficacy, people are more likely to give if they feel their input is important for the cause they are supporting -- that their gifts are making a real difference. If they feel their giving is making a difference, they are more likely to give more and more often.

Needless to say, the mechanisms of the researchers and scholars have found are not perfect predictors in spite of the careful research and moderating conclusions. There may be factors, which moderate those conclusions. For example, while there is clear evidence that religiously active persons such as church parishioners give more, Mark Chaves in "Financing American Religion" found that Catholics give less than

²² Bekkers and Wiepking, "Understanding Philanthropy," accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.fss.uu.nl/soc/homes/bekkers/understanding>.

Protestants.²³ One of the surprising discoveries in this research has been some of the conclusions and facts revealed in the scholarly research on charitable giving. In addition to finding out that Protestant giving is much higher than that of practicing Roman Catholics, it has become known that while income is positively related to the amount of money donated annually, the percentage of giving is inversely related to the percentage of one's income that is donated. This leads us to conclude with these scholars that those with fewer resources tend to make the greatest sacrifices as it relates to charitable giving. A further revelatory observation by these researchers that is so often lost in such discussions is that, "Those with lower incomes are often ineligible for the tax-incentives that lure those with more means into donating."²⁴

Charitable giving differs from other types of prosocial behavior in the sense that there is often a separation between the giver and those receiving the benefits of the gifts. Charitable contributions are usually made to an organization, which then makes use of the resources for the benefit of the recipients. Thus, people may give to their church, the United Negro College Fund, the NAACP, The Salvation Army or to an umbrella organization like The United Way. These organizations distribute the money or resources to individuals in need or to other social agencies. The point here is that the helper does not really come in contact with those being helped. This type of giving enables the giver to help and even to contribute to the poor and the disenfranchised in a more anonymous way. For many, this is an important aspect of this type of giving.

²³ Mark Chaves, "Financing American Religion," *New Directions in Philanthropic Fundraising* 35 (2002): 41-54.

²⁴ Collett and Morrissey, "The Social Psychology of Generosity," *Science of Generosity* (October 2007).

There are other types of philanthropy that do not remain anonymous and may be given for recognition and even self-interest. For example, many large gifts (over 50 million dollars) go to colleges and universities, museums, hospitals, private foundations and so on. These types of philanthropic gifts are not really charity in the sense as defined at the beginning of this chapter, but are nevertheless philanthropy. Therefore "generous giving" must be included in the discussion. Sometimes the gifts are made to organizations or groups in which the giver participates or the giver was once affiliated or benefited from in the past, such as colleges or universities, and the goal seems to be reciprocal -- even sometimes with the giver's name placed on rooms or institutes or buildings. In many cases the whole institution's name may be changed to the giver's name, e.g. Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was recently re-named Palmer Theological Seminary after a large gift from that family (surprisingly, the gift was not 50 million dollars, but ten million). Another example is the business school of University of Pennsylvania was changed some years ago to The Wharton School of Business. One can speak of these such gifts as being morally motivated, but one cannot deny some self-interest.

It is for certain that there are exceptions to these dynamics and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are examples currently, as Collett and Morrissey are careful to point out:

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, founded by the leader of Microsoft. This foundation's mission is to enhance healthcare, reduce extreme poverty, and increase availability of computers in public libraries (albeit globally, without focus on The United States of America) and to expand educational opportunities in the United States, particularly by providing increased access to information technology.²⁵

²⁵ Collett and. Morrissey, "The Social Psychology of Generosity," *Science of Generosity* (October 2007).

But more important to our consideration is the statement of the Foundation itself and their cogent mission statement:

We work with partner organizations worldwide to tackle critical problems in four program areas. Our Global Development Division works to help the world's poorest people lift themselves out of hunger and poverty. Our Global Health Division aims to harness advances in science and technology to save lives in developing countries. Our United States Division works to improve U.S. high school and postsecondary education and support vulnerable children and families in Washington State. And our Global Policy & Advocacy Division seeks to build strategic relationships and promote policies that will help advance our work. Our approach to grantmaking in all four areas emphasizes collaboration, innovation, risk-taking, and, most importantly, results.²⁶

We cannot possibly talk about "generous giving" without including volunteering time as a charitable contribution. The fact is that in many cases it is worth even more than money and may either save money or encourage and solicit financial support to charitable organizations -- including the church which would not have been received if there had not been such volunteers who have given of their time and their resources.

As to the church, many denominations have as a part of their vows of membership or the covenant persons becoming members have as their promise and pledge to give of their time to the church. In The United Methodist Church, the question is asked of every prospective members: "Will you be loyal to the United Methodist Church and uphold it and support it with your prayers, your presence, your gifts, and your service?" The prospective member is expected to answer in the affirmative: "I WILL."

²⁶ Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, "What We Do," accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/What-We-Do>.

Collett and Morrissey are helpful as they divide the investigation of the reasons for volunteering into three categories. We will use the categories and include other studies to analyze and clarify these reasons. They include 1) individual factors, 2) social factors, and 3) some combination of these two.

Prosocial research tries to identify individual personality traits as being a part of the profile of individual factors for volunteering. They seem to include the following: trust and acceptance, extraversion, intuiting, empathy, and helpfulness. In testing these factors, psychologists have used the Myers-Briggs type indicator;²⁷ what has been called the Sixteen Personality Factor,²⁸ and some have designed their own prosocial personality battery.

The attached test cited by Collett and Morrissey will show two factors: other-oriented empathy -- high scorers on this measure are empathetic and feel responsibility toward others and helpfulness, i.e., having a history of being helpful and not likely to experience personal discomfort in response to others' needs.²⁹

The social factors seem to involve extensive social ties resulting in more frequent volunteering. In other words, the more socially integrated a person may be the more likely they are to be asked to volunteer. The more social ties one may have, the more likely that person is to be aware of problems and the more likely that person is expected to volunteer and to expect that volunteering to be effective. People with higher incomes

²⁷ Clifton W. Mitchell and Michael I. Shuff, "Personality Characteristics of Hospice Volunteers as Measured by Myers-Briggs Type Indicator," *Journal of Personality Assessment* 65 (1995): 521-532.

²⁸ Reuben T. Spitz and John R. MacKinnon, "Predicting Success in Volunteer Community Service," *Psychological Reports* 73 (1993): 815-818.

²⁹ Louis A. Penner et al., "Measuring the Prosocial Personality," *Advances in Personality Assessment*, (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1995), 147-163.

and who are seen as being in a higher socio-economic status are more likely to join and be active in more organizations. People who are regular church-goers and who attend church regularly and are faithful are more likely to be active in the congregational life and the ministries of the church.

Several other demographic factors have been discovered through research, which contribute to volunteering. They are increasing age with a peak in middle age, gender (in the United States women are slightly more likely than men to volunteer), education (strongly associated with levels of education), ethnicity (minorities are less likely to volunteer than whites). These factors are obviously complicated and may even be eschewed. For example, when socio-economic factors are similar or the same, the difference between whites and ethnic minorities volunteering is erased. While this writer has no empirical data to report, it is his experience that whether ethnic minorities -- and especially African Americans -- can depend on local and national events and the section of the nation where events may occur, e.g. Katrina and the thousands of African Americans of all social and economic status making their way to the Gulf Coast to volunteer in all kinds of ways, or the Hurricane situation in Haiti and the loss of so many lives and property. Untold numbers of Black people raised money and boarded airplanes to volunteer time and money to aid the people of that marvelous island in multiple ways.

In evaluating the reasons why Americans give to various organizations and charities the reasons vary. The holiday seasons such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year to celebrate. Sumptuous and, most of the times, extravagant meals are planned and shared -- not just with the family but with the homeless, the poor and the destitute and disenfranchised. Efforts are made to volunteer to feed the poor in church basements,

social and fellowship halls, in community centers and fraternal places of gathering such as Prince Hall Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Columbus, and Greek fraternity houses of various descriptions. Generous and lucrative baskets are gathered and filled with food of every description for Thanksgiving, and all kinds of clothing, toys and gifts for Christmas, and certainly "Toys for Tots." The urge and the appeal to give is awakened anew and giving plays an important role in American society. The Salvation Army has bells and red kettles and persons urging the public to give to aid the poor and the needy. Churches take special Christmas collections for sundry charitable and eleemosynary causes. But there is still the haunting and evasive mystery, which all of the research and scholarly efforts of economists, psychologists, social scientists and even theologians don't seem to be able to satisfy or provide conclusive answers: Why do people give to charity? Why do Americans reach into their pockets, their bank accounts, their savings, and little children reach into their hiding places, pull out and pour out their "Piggy banks" to give to others? Hard-working Americans give their hard-earned money to charity? In most cases it is to give to strangers. Why do Americans want to help others at their own expense?

Research by economists, psychologists, and social scientists suggest that the impulse to give does not square with thinking in such a generally calculating market-conscious culture and society. One writer has suggested a perspective: "helping others, even when it costs us dearly, is simply part of being successful social animals. Despite our imperative to compete, we ultimately find it pays off to be generous."³⁰ According to

³⁰ Leon Neyfakh, "Why We Give to Charity," *Ideas* (December 2011).

Janice Petty, individuals give based on personal and organizational motivation.³¹

Marybeth Gasman and Sibby Anderson Thompkins indicate that the African American population is motivated to give back to uplift their race.³² Additional researchers state that individuals give to organizations because of their experiences, engagements, direct benefit, influences, excellent leadership, and or loyalty.³³

³¹ Janice Petty, *Cultivating Diversity in Fundraising* (New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2002).

³² Marybeth Gasman and Sibby Anderson-Thompkins, *Fundraising From Black-College Alumni: Successful Strategies for Supporting Alma Mater* (Washington, DC: Council for Advancement and Support of Education, 2003).

³³ H.J. Seymour, *Design for Fundraising Principles, Patterns and Techniques*, (Rockville, MD: Fundraising Institute, A Division of the Raft Group, 1988).

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The reason and rationale for conducting this research project was to study the concept of giving through the lens of generosity. In doing so, the areas of spiritual formation, contextual analysis, biblical, historical, theological and theoretical perspectives were evaluated. These perspectives were studied in hopes of providing valuable insight on the methodologies with which people give. The study was designed to determine the rationale of giving. Ultimately, the desire was to evaluate giving from a holistic perspective with the hopes of gaining insight that may be beneficial in encouraging people to give from a place of gratitude to God. When parishioners are able to embrace the fact that God gave His everything to humanity, they too should be willing to generously give back to Him. The generosity of giving should be reflective of the appreciation to God for all that He has done for humanity and will continue to do.

Research Sampling

The research project was designed to address God's gratitude to humanity through a series of Bible Study. There were a total of five Bible Study classes conducted over a two-day period. The Bible Study classes were held on Saturday, March 12th and Sunday, March 13th, 2016. There were fifteen participants. There were six males and nine females. The age ranges were between thirty-five and eighty (plus). Two participants fell

within the age range of thirty-five to forty-nine. Three participants fell in the age range of fifty to sixty-four. Nine participants fell in the age range of sixty-five to seventy-nine, and one participant fell in the age range of eighty plus. The genetic make-up of the group consisted of ten African American, two Asian American or Pacific Islander and three Caucasian/White. Educationally, one participant had completed at least two years of college. Four participants had completed an undergraduate degree. Four participants had completed a master's degree. Five participants had completed a doctoral degree and one participant provided no response as it related to their educational experience.

From the financial perspective, the income amongst the participants ranged from \$40,000 to greater than \$150,000. Two participants were in the category of \$40,000 to \$59,000; two participants were in the category of \$60,000 to \$79,000; two participants were in the category of \$80,000 to \$99,000; four participants were in the category of \$100,000 to \$149,000; four participants were in the category of greater than \$150,000; and one participant provided no response.

Among the fifteen participants, there was a lengthy historical representation of membership at Colesville United Methodist Church. Four participants held membership between thirty-six and forty-nine years (26.7%). Two participants had been members between twenty-one to thirty-five years (13.3%). Four participants held membership between six to ten years (26.7%), and three participants had been members between one and five years (20.0%). Only two participants had been at the church for less than one year (13.3%).

Length of Membership	Frequency	Percent
0 years	2	13.3
1 - 5 years	3	20.0
6 -10 years	4	26.7
11 - 20	0	0.0
21 - 35	2	13.3
36 - 49	4	26.7
50 +	0	0.0
Total	15	100.0

Data Collection Procedure

Upon determining that the research would focus on generosity, I began to ponder on the qualitative research that would be conducted. The research tool that was selected and used was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences for data analysis. After selecting the research tool, the congregation was informed of the doctoral work being conducted at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, and everyone was invited to participate in the study. Following the general announcement, a more formal invitation was extended by letter. The letter informed the potential participants of the title of the research, "Creating a Spirit of Generosity: Teaching the Components of Giving." The letter solicited for at least twelve to twenty participants. Further, the potential participants were informed of the date, time and location of the Bible Study lessons. After fifteen participants were obtained, they received an overview of expectations, their input, their participation in a pre- and post-test, and the completion of general information for statistical purposes. Each participant was informed that his or her

participation would be anonymous. With the preliminary work confirmed the field experience began with the Bible Study lessons.

Field Experience

The first Bible Study was conducted under the title, “The Generous Contributions,” with the biblical undergirding of Exodus 35:1-36:7. In researching these scriptures it was noted that there was a wide-spread attitude of giving among Christians from the New Testament and the Old Testament scriptures. Despite the differences there was also continuity. Within the first lesson, the focus was largely placed on the continuity in the teaching of giving. In evaluating the passage, it is important to note the importance of the building of the tabernacle due to the amount of space designated to the topic of the tabernacle, which is thirteen chapters, the location within the chapter and the consistent theme, which is the presence of God in the midst of His people. The main focal points of the Bible Study were:

1. Israel’s giving was on voluntary bases.
2. They gave willingly and joyfully.
3. The Israelites’ gifts were given in abundance and unanimously.
4. They gave out of proportion, meaning everyone gave in accordance to what they had.
5. The gifts of the Israelites were of the highest quality.

Based on these themes, the Bible Study progressed into the second lesson and the discussion was based on 2 Corinthians 8:1-12 to help congregants gain a better understanding of the concept of giving out of a place of generosity. The giving that is

reflected according to Paul was the need to give to those who were in dire need. Paul's teaching on giving was directly related to the problems in the Corinthian church, which he had addressed in his two recorded Corinthian epistles. These are words every Christian needs first to hear, then to understand, and finally to put into practice. Paul uses the Macedonian as a model for others to emulate when considering the act of giving out of generosity. One of the greatest take-away from the model of giving generously is the fact that the amounts of the gifts were not mentioned. It was clear that Paul was not impressed with the amount or size of the gift. The emphasis of giving was placed on their liberal giving, especially when considering that the Macedonian churches were facing a "great ordeal of affliction," or "deep poverty." Due to these circumstances, Paul does not expect much from the Macedonians in terms of a contribution for the poor in Jerusalem. It is clear that Paul's expectations are considerably exceeded as he indicates in verse 5. Paul provides us with the underlying basis for the Macedonians' generosity. First, they gave themselves to the Lord. The Macedonian saints have been gloriously and graciously saved through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christ gave Himself for their salvation; how could they not give themselves to Him? They are His servants, eager and willing to walk in His footsteps. If "God so loved the world that He gave ...," how can they refuse to give to those in dire need?

Second, the Macedonians gave themselves to the apostles, as our Lord's earthly spokesmen. When the Macedonians gave themselves to the apostles, they were responsive to the needs of others, as the Apostles point out. The Macedonians' giving is exemplary in several regards. First, as we have seen, they gave generously at a time when they were poor themselves. Second, the Macedonians gave voluntarily. The term

“voluntarily” fails to adequately express the spirit of the Macedonians. These people who were in “deep poverty” pleaded with Paul for the privilege of giving generously. One of the ancients observes that the only “begging” which took place here was the “begging” of the poor Macedonians, pleading with Paul for the privilege of sharing what little they had with those who had even less.

Third, the Macedonians gave gratefully. These folks gave generously to people whom they had never seen and likely would never meet. It would be one thing for someone in their situation to give to a relative in deep need, but to give to a stranger is something even more amazing. The gift of the Macedonians evidences their gratitude to God for saving them through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Fourth, these Macedonians gave to those in Jerusalem who were their brothers and sisters in Christ. They gave to fellow believers as evidence of their unity in Christ. Fifth, the Macedonians gave joyfully. Paul did not have to wrench the money from their hands; they readily and joyfully insisted on giving. They found great joy in what they were doing. In their affliction, the Macedonians experienced joy; in their deep poverty, they exhibited great generosity (8:2). This is truly an amazing group. Paul, therefore, points the Corinthians to the Macedonians as a model and standard for their giving. Let the Corinthians follow in the footsteps of their Macedonian brethren.

The second module of giving in the scriptures was the giving of Jesus Christ, (8:8-9). The human benchmark of the Macedonians’ love and generosity is far surpassed by the divine benchmark for love and sacrifice to those in need. The ultimate example of gracious giving is our Lord Jesus Christ, by His sacrificial atoning work on the cross of Calvary. He was infinitely “rich” in the presence of His Father (see John 17:5;

Philippians 2:6). He willingly “became poor” in His incarnation (Philippians 2:5-8). He was born in a very humble setting, having a cattle trough as a bed, and being born to parents who were far from rich. He left the “wealth” of heaven and took on the “poverty” of this earth in His incarnation. He who was rich became poor for the sake of those of us who were spiritually “bankrupt” in our sins. Through faith in His sacrificial work on the Cross of Calvary, He has made all those who trust in Him exceedingly rich. Whatever we might do for those who are poor can never compare with the work of Christ on the cross. Our material wealth can never compare to His heavenly glory; and our sacrificial poverty can never compare to the “poverty” He endured in His incarnation. The person and work of Christ is the basis for our motivation, and it is the standard for our ministry. The cross of Christ, that message which seems foolish to the unbelieving (1 Corinthians 1:18-25), and certainly to the unbelieving “false apostles” (see 2 Corinthians 11:4), is the unending theme of all of Paul’s teaching. As he can never speak enough of the cross, we should never hear enough of the cross of Christ (see Colossians 2).

The third Bible Study lesson was focused on “Stewardship: It All Belongs to God.” The scriptural reference was Matthew 25:13-30. One person recently asked: “What does stewardship look like in our lives today?” Unfortunately many Christians today only associate the idea of stewardship with sermons they have heard about as it relates to church budgets and building programs. However, the idea of biblical stewardship is about something much more expansive. It is where the concepts of faith, work and economics intersect.

Bill Peel recently wrote an essay entitled “Leadership Is Stewardship.” His essay can help us build a framework to begin unpacking this biblical idea of stewardship. Peel

suggests that there are four important principles about biblical stewardship we must understand: the principle of ownership, the principle of responsibility, the principle of accountability and the principle of reward.¹ In the beginning of Genesis, God creates everything and puts Adam in the Garden to work it and care for it. It is clear that man was created to work and that work is the stewardship of all of the creation that God has given him. This is the fundamental principle of biblical stewardship. God owns everything; we are simply managers or administrators acting on His behalf. Therefore, stewardship expresses our obedience regarding the administration of everything God has placed under our control, which is all encompassing. Stewardship is the commitment of one's self and possessions to God's service, recognizing that we do not have the right of control over our property or ourselves.²

In the principle of responsibility, Peel writes, although God gives us "all things richly to enjoy," nothing is ours. Nothing really belongs to us. God owns everything; we are responsible for how we treat it and what we do with it. While we complain about our rights here on earth, the Bible constantly asks, What about your responsibilities? Owners have rights; stewards have responsibilities. We are called as God's stewards to manage that which belongs to God. While God has graciously entrusted us with the care, development, and enjoyment of everything He owns as His stewards, we are responsible to manage His holdings well and according to His desires and purposes.³

¹ Bill Peel, "Leadership Is Stewardship," *The High Calling*, modified December 15, 2008, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.thehighcalling.org/articles/essay/leadership-stewardship-part-1>.

² Peel, "Leadership Is Stewardship," accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.thehighcalling.org/articles/essay/leadership-stewardship-part-1>.

³ Peel, "Leadership Is Stewardship," accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.thehighcalling.org/articles/essay/leadership-stewardship-part-1>.

The principle of accountability is one who manages the possessions of another. We are all stewards of the resources, abilities and opportunities that God has entrusted to our care, and one day each one of us will be called to give an account for how we have managed what the Master has given us. An excellent example is the parable of the talents. Within this parable there are several elements worth noting: the element of time, the element of money, the element of work, and the element of profit.⁴

Bible Study Lesson number four continued with the theme of stewardship and the title was “Stewardship: It’s a Matter of the Heart, Blessed Babies and A Miserable Millionaire.” The foundational scripture for the lesson was Luke 18:15-30. In the text, Jesus told His disciples that adults must receive the kingdom of God like children. Jesus did not say that adults had to become children, but rather that they must become child-like, in some way, in order to enter the kingdom of God. In the study of this text, we learned of the child-like characteristic men must have in order to enter into the kingdom of God. In evaluating the scripture, in the first paragraph, child-likeness is an aid, an essential element. In the second paragraph, being rich is a hindrance. Thus, in this passage, as so often in the Gospel of Luke, Jesus reversed the values of His day. Even the disciples were astounded at what Jesus said here. The setting of the text and the subject at hand is that of the character of those who will enter into the kingdom of God, when it is established on the earth. It was such an important matter that Jesus could urge the rich young ruler to give up all of his wealth to be added to that group who would enter into

⁴ Peel, “Leadership Is Stewardship,” accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.thehighcalling.org/articles/essay/leadership-stewardship-part-1>.

eternal life. The issues of the text are eternal ones. Nothing matters more in this life, or the next, than the things which Jesus is speaking of here.

The second component of the lesson focused on the blessings of the babies (18:15-17), and a number of people brought their babies to Jesus to be blessed.

“Jesus says: Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all,” (Luke 18:17). There are numerous questions which arise from these three short verses, but one of the most important is: What is the specific characteristic of child-likeness to which our Lord is referring, which is necessary for anyone to enter into the kingdom? The text informs us that the children who come to Jesus are very young children. The characteristics of the babies vary in that they do not trust, nor do they practice humility. They make no conscious decisions. They speak no words. They understand no words. The next clue comes from the next paragraph: the rich young ruler speaks of his “works” from the point of his childhood onward. It is just as though Luke has put these two paragraphs side-by-side in order to show us something very important by contrast. The rich young ruler wishes to talk about that which he has done since childhood in order to earn God’s favor. Jesus takes the children in His arms, and tells everyone that they must enter the kingdom of God like these children come to Him. I believe that Jesus was using the coming of the children to Him to be blessed as an illustration of the way in which all people must come to Him for a blessing. That is, if we would come to Jesus for a blessing, we must not come in our own strength (the babes were carried), we must not come through our own understanding, our own wisdom, our own good works. We can only come to Christ in our helpless state, looking to Him and to His grace alone. We must come out of our weakness and helpless state, not out of our

own righteousness. The thing which commends children to Christ is their helplessness, not their goodness, which is precisely what must characterize every person who comes into the kingdom as helpless and undeserving, entering into His blessings because of God's goodness and grace, not due to their own merits. Here is the child-like quality, which must characterize all who would enter into His kingdom.

The third focal point of the lesson was centered on the rich young ruler (18:18-30). The notable observations of the ruler are that he was rich, which means he had great possessions to sell. The ruler was young, which is an indication that his wealth was inherited as opposed to earned or self-induced. As a ruler, he had power and influence within various spheres, perhaps within the community, the government or within the church. Despite the ruler's influence and affluence, he was attracted and drawn to Jesus out of respect and reverence. Due to the fact that Jesus made the request to sell his possessions, he was deeply saddened because he would not be following Jesus. The young ruler felt as though he had maintained the law, yet he later found no assurance in the law. It is amazing, but true. This man seemed to have everything. He was very rich. And yet it was he (Matthew 19:20) who first raised the question about what he lacked, only to be answered by our Lord (Luke 18:22). The law gave this man no assurance of eternal life.

The Bible Study yielded to several questions that are relevant for daily application:

1. Why can our Lord say that the rich young ruler lacked only one thing, and what was it?
2. Why did Jesus seem to separate treasure in heaven from following Him?

3. Why did Jesus tell the rich young ruler to sell his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor, as though this would make him perfect, and earn eternal life for him?

The rich young ruler was not the only person who was sad. From every indication, Jesus was saddened by his departure as well. It is only at the point of this man's departure that any of the gospel writers tell us that he was rich. This was a key factor in his decision to depart, for Jesus' words of explanation point to his riches as the root of his problem.

According to our Lord, this man's riches are what kept him from the kingdom. Jesus told the man to rid himself of his riches, not so that he could merit his salvation, but so that the one barrier between him and heaven could be removed. This is why Jesus said the man lacked one thing. For the young ruler to rid himself of this possession his trust would solely rest with the trust in God. Keeping his wealth meant that he could never put Christ first, could never love and trust in Him with a whole heart, as the law commanded. This man's problem was not seen as an isolated instance by our Lord, but as an illustration of how things should be implemented within the Christian community.

Bible Study Lesson number five was on "Stewardship: What are We Going to Do About It." The foundation of the lesson was focused on the sermon, "*The Use of Money*" by John Wesley from Luke 16. Wesley's theological stance was that everything comes from God. He believed that, "God is at the very beginning of our existence – we did not bring it about ourselves. We are not the creator – we are the created. We did not create the materials that we use to make various items. God has provided us with life, but even

more importantly, God provides the grace that leads us to the full life of salvation.”⁵ The overarching notion was to “Gain all you can,” “Save all you can,” and “Give all you can.” The idea of gaining, saving, and giving were all based from a healthy perspective, meaning that one should not attempt to gain, give and save to the detriment of themselves or others. Gaining, giving and saving should all be completed within the confines of the biblical writ, and with the rationale to provide assistance to others. For example, earning money was discouraged if it came at the expense of risking one’s health, or jeopardizing physical, mental or spiritual acumen. Also, Wesley stressed that gaining, giving and saving should not affect or infect a neighbor.

Additionally, the concept of “not wasting” was integrated into gaining, giving and saving, meaning one should not be wasteful of their resources, but should use them with modesty. By operating in modesty, Wesley insinuates that it will alleviate lusts of the flesh, eyes, pride of life. From the giving perspective, Wesley felt that we should give back as much as possible simply because of the generosity in which God gave to humanity. As a result, we would be actively participating in the work of God. Further, we are expected to effectively manage what God has given so that we could give back to God and to others. When we use our resources to indulge our desires instead of meeting the needs of the poor, we do not merely miss an opportunity to do good; we “rob God,” taking what God has entrusted to our administration and turning it from the purposes for which it was given. To take Wesley’s sermon seriously would require a whole new way of thinking about how we earn and use money in a world in which others are in want. If we think about the use of money as a spiritual discipline, then we can see that the point is

⁵ John Wesley, *The Use of Money*, Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://www.umcmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons/Sermon-50-The-Use-of-Money>.

not to give away what we think is extra. The point is to play our role in distributing God's resources equitably, not denying our own needs, but seeing the needs of others to be as legitimate as our own.

The second component of the Bible Study focused on other practical applications that would help to enforce the gaining, giving and saving concepts that were raised from Wesley's sermon. The concepts included debt-free living, the four reasons people ended up with unsustainable debt, debts to bondage and saving for the future. The debt-free living concept was grounded in Proverbs 22:7, which states, "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender." T.D. Jakes once made this powerful statement: "Many people buy their wants and beg their needs."⁶ Some people are not mature enough to discern the differences between needs and wants. If they did, they would understand that there is no justification for buying a new \$500 cell phone when they struggle to pay their monthly telephone bill. There is no reason to buy an SUV, when you cannot afford to keep gas in it. One should not spend in excess if you do not have funds allocated for emergencies. The problem is, some of us have not learned to say "no" to the flesh. God called us to be the master over our money and not the other way around, "For you are a slave to whatever controls you," (2 Peter 2:19). Every purchase we make has a spiritual impact or consequence. The Bible teaches us: "A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls," Proverbs 25:28 NLT. If we do not exercise self-control, we are exposed to things that God has never intended for our lives. Uncontrolled spending causes us to be no longer in control as debt adversely impacts the way we live. The interest we pay out could be used for savings, investments, giving to

⁶ T.D. Jakes, *But I Can't Afford to Tithe!* (Dallas TX: T.D. Jakes Enterprise, 1997), 24.

others and ultimately serving God. People find themselves in precarious situations of unsustainable debt for the reasons of ignorance, impulse, indulgence and immaturity. Within the Bible Lesson, ignorance was discussed from Proverbs 22:3, which states, “The prudent see danger and take refuge, but the simple keep going and pay the penalty,” and Proverbs 27:23-24, which states, “Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds.” Impulse was taught from the Proverbs 22:3, which states, “A prudent man foresees the difficulties ahead and prepares for them; the simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences.” Indulgence was taught from Proverbs 21:17 and Proverbs 14:29 which states, “A man who loves pleasure becomes poor; wine and luxury are not the way to riches!” Immaturity was taught from Ecclesiastes 7:12 and Proverbs 1:5, which reads, “For the protection of wisdom is like the protection of money, and the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom gives life to the one who possesses it.” “Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance.”

During the lesson there were several biblical principles that were discussed as it relates to debt. The principles are as follows:

1. Debt leads to bondage
2. Devise a plan to get out of debt
3. Control or eliminate the use of credit cards
4. Avoid surety
5. Commit to repaying all loans
6. Check your credit report

The final component of the lesson consisted of saving for the future and the various charitable vehicles that are available to make contributions to the church. A critical element of staying out of debt is savings. Without savings, we will continuously be in debt. To save means to forgo spending today in order to save for tomorrow. However, the problem is we focus too much on what we want today and have the attitude to forget about tomorrow. The Bible teaches us that we need to save and that even the ant is wise enough to know the importance of saving for the lean days of winter. Many struggle because we do not have the financial means to meet our needs during the lean times. During times of plenty, like the ant we are not to spend all that we have, but we are to save. Not only do we need to save for college, retirement, buying a home or buying a car, we need to save for the unexpected. Without savings we will use credit cards for the unexpected, pushing us deeper into debt. The principles we learn from saving are: preparedness (Gen. 41:47-49), return on investments (Gen. 41:56), and the ability to be a blessing to others (Gen. 43:16-34).

Once embracing the concept of saving, one needs to understand that savings only begin when one stops spending. Further, one can only give when there are resources available. Saving money requires patience and self-control, both of which are Fruit of the Spirit. We need to continue to give in traditional ways of giving, but also learn new ways of giving that can benefit you, your family and church or other charitable organizations. The more structured giving vehicles are called planned gifts, which consist of: charitable bequests, gifts of life insurance, real estate, listed securities, charitable donations, trusts and endowments. Planned giving is above all a gesture that comes from the heart. However, it is important to be informed about the tax regulations which will be applied.

Participants Pre-Post Test

Each participant was given the pre and post-test to determine their knowledge of the subject of generous giving. The Pre and Post-Test was named: Creating a Spirit of Generosity: The Components of Giving. The focus of the questionnaire were developed from a biblical, theological and a practical perspective. The participants were not identified and were at liberty to conduct their responses anonymously. Their anonymity was protected by assigning a number as opposed to providing a name. The numbers were tracked by the researcher and the information was not shared with others. The pre and post-test were conducted at Colesville United Methodist Church in Silver Spring, Maryland. The pre and post-test consisted of demographic information, questions on practicality, biblical, theological, sociology and space for the participant to express additional comments or concerns as it relates to the test. The questions on the pre and post-test are indicated as follows:

DEMOGRAPHIC IDENTITY (circle one letter on each question that identifies you)

Assigned Number: { }

Age: a) 20 – 34 b) 35 – 49 c) 50 – 64 d) 65 - 79 e) 80+

Race/Ethnicity: a) African American/Black b) Asian American/Pacific Islander
c) Hispanic/Latino/a d) Native American
e) Caucasian/White f) Other _____

Gender: a) Female b) Male

Education: a) High School b) Craft/Trade Certificate
c) 2-year college d) 4-yr Undergraduate degree
d) Masters degree e) Doctoral degree
f) Other _____

Income: a) <\$ 22,000 per year b) \$ 23,000 - \$ 39,000 per year
c) \$ 40,000 - \$59,000 d) \$ 60,000 - \$ 79,000 per year
e) \$ 80,000 - \$99,000 f) \$100,000 - \$149,000 per year
g) >\$150,000

Length of Membership @ CUMC: a) 1 – 5 yrs b) 6 -10 yrs c) 11 – 20 yrs
d) 21 – 35 yrs e) 36- 49 yrs f) 50+ yrs

In taking the pre and post-test, each participant was asked to answer the questions if they:

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided/Unknown
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

PRACTICAL (circle one response following each question)

1. I feel a heavy burden of obligation to pledge and give to my church.
2. I would give more generously of my time, talents and financial resources if my church had significant needs to be faithful and effective in ministry.
3. If everyone gave as I do, sacrificial giving would not be necessary for anyone.
4. Soliciting pledges to encourage annual giving is not necessary any more.
5. The increasing demand for time, energy and money for my church is overwhelming me and other members of the CUMC.
6. Since God is faithful to give me abundant life, I should joyfully give to support the ministry of my church with whatever gifts are needed.
7. Our church is more focused on God's generous abundance to us than our lack of resources.
8. My church consistently supports ministry with an over-abundance of material offerings.
9. I give generously and cannot increase the amount.
10. The biblical concept of the "tithe" is not necessary in the 21st century.

BIBLICAL (circle one response following each question)

1. In the Old Testament (Book of Exodus in particular), "liberation," "law," "covenant," and the importance of building a "tent of meeting" (later a temple) all have implications for God's generous faithfulness to the people then, and to the "People of God" at CUMC now.

2. The Old Testament is also about the faithfulness of the people in response to God, then and now.
3. In the New Testament, Pauline theology in particular, the central notion of generosity is found in Jesus himself.
4. Extravagant generosity requires addressing all of the aspects and dimensions of life in the ministry of the CUMC as an important and necessary part of our faithfulness in response to God.
5. The Bible as a whole pays more attention to the care of poor and downtrodden people than comfortable well-to-do people.

THEOLOGICAL (circle one response following each question)

1. Extravagant generosity in Paul's theology was necessary for "equality" and "fairness among the most needy."
2. Generosity of the heart is the beginning of other forms of generous actions and relationships.
3. Study of the Bible is for spiritual edification, and just as importantly, for understanding and faithful participation in what God is creating, redeeming and sustaining in the 21st century.
4. Generosity is always about what God/Christ/Holy Spirit is doing and how we the believers respond.
5. Since we cannot completely know the mind of God, theological interpretation in accordance with the many works, signs and wonders is what we must rely on to the best of our ability.

SOCIOLOGICAL (circle one response following each question)

1. Our action as faithful Christians for justice and equality in community and society is an important means by which God's generosity is extended to the faithful and those of other faiths the world.
2. Paying apportionments designated for missions beyond our local congregation and community should be reduced.
3. In the Bible generosity relates to the personal and social dimensions of life including spiritual, temporal, political, economic, and cultural aspects.

4. Christian stewardship requires direct participation in sustaining the natural environment, which God has created and given us responsibility to provide for its care.
5. Extravagant generosity that truly seeks justice, “equality” and “fairness” in human social relations must always work to correct the disparities of wealth and poverty in a 21st century world where most people are forced to survive on less than two dollars a day

Data Analysis

The participants completed the pre and the post-test and the responses are imbedded within the text to determine their responses. In tabulating the responses, the system collected data on two additional persons, but they are identified as missing within the collected data. Therefore, the data has been adjusted to reflect the actual responses from the fifteen participants. The data analysis to each question is immediately followed after each question.

Pre-Test Results

The pre-test results indicate the following according to each question:

1. I feel a heavy burden of obligation to pledge and give to my church.

Of the participants, three indicated that they strongly disagree (20.0%), two indicated that they disagree (13.3%), two indicated that they were undecided/unknown (13.3%), five indicated that they agree (33.3%), and three indicated that they strongly agree (20.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	20.0
Disagree	2	13.3
Undecided/Unkno	2	13.3
Agree	5	33.3
Strongly Agree	3	20.0
Total	15	100.0

2. I would give more generously of my time, talents and financial resources if my church had significant needs to be faithful and effective in ministry.

Of the participants, two indicated that they strongly disagree (13.3), five indicated that they disagree (33.3%) three indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), and five indicated that they agree (33.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	13.3
Disagree	5	33.3
Undecided/Unknow	3	20.0
Agree	5	33.3
Total	15	100.0

3. If everyone gave as I do, sacrificial giving would not be necessary for anyone.

Of the participants, one indicated that they strongly disagree (6.7%), three indicated that they disagree (20.0%), six indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), three indicated that they agree (20.0%), and two indicated that they strongly agree (13.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7
Disagree	3	20.0
Undecided/Unkno	6	40.0
Agree	3	20.0
Strongly Agree	2	13.3
Total	15	100.0

4. Soliciting pledges to encourage annual giving is not necessary any more. If everyone gave as I do, sacrificial giving would not be necessary for anyone.

Of the participants, six indicated that they strongly disagree (40.0%), eight indicated that they disagree (53.3%), and one indicated that they agree (6.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	6	40.0
Disagree	8	53.3
Agree	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0

5. The increasing demand for time, energy and money for my church is overwhelming me and other members of the CUMC.

Of the participants, two indicated that they strongly disagree (13.3%), eight indicated that they disagree (53.3%), four indicated that they were undecided/unknown (26.7%), and one indicated that they agree (6.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	13.3
Disagree	8	53.3
Undecided/Unkno	4	26.7
Agree	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0

6. Since God is faithful to give me abundant life, I should joyfully give to support the ministry of my church with whatever gifts are needed.

Of the participants, one indicated that they disagree (6.7%), one indicated that they were undecided/unknown (6.7%), seven indicated that they agree (46.7%), and six indicated that they strongly agree (40.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	6.7
Undecided/Unkno	1	6.7
Agree	7	46.7
Strongly Agree	6	40.0
Total	15	100.0

7. Our church is more focused on God's generous abundance to us than our lack of resources.

Of the participants, one indicated that they strongly disagree (6.7%), five indicated that they disagree (33.3%), five indicated that they were undecided/unknown (33.3%), and four indicated that they agree (26.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7
Disagree	5	33.3
Undecided/Unkno	5	33.3
Agree	4	26.7
Total	15	100.0

8. My church consistently supports ministry with an over-abundance of material offerings.

Of the participants, two indicated that they strongly disagree (13.3%), seven indicated that they disagree (46.7%), four indicated that they were undecided/unknown (26.7%), and two indicated that they agree (13.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	13.3
Disagree	7	46.7
Undecided/Unkno	4	26.7
Agree	2	13.3
Total	15	100.0

9. I give generously and cannot increase the amount.

Of the participants, five indicated that they strongly disagree (33.3%), four indicated that they were undecided/unknown (26.7%), and six indicated that they agree (40.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	5	33.3
Undecided/Unk	4	26.7
Agree	6	40.0
Total	15	100.0

10. The biblical concept of the “tithe” is not necessary in the 21st century.

Of the participants, five indicated that they strongly disagree (33.3%), four indicated that they disagree (26.7%), three indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), and three indicated that they agree (20.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	5	33.3
Disagree	4	26.7
Undecided/Unk	3	20.0
Agree	3	20.0
Total	15	100.0

BIBLICAL

1. In the Old Testament (Book of Exodus in particular), “liberation,” “law,” “covenant,” and the importance of building a “tent of meeting” (later a temple) all have implications for God’s generous faithfulness to the people then, and to the “People of God” at CUMC now.

Of the participants, one indicated that they disagree (6.7%), three indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), ten indicated that they agree (66.7%), and one indicated that they strongly agree (6.7%).

		Frequency	Percent
	Disagree	1	6.7
	Undecided/Unkno	3	20.0
	Agree	10	66.7
	6.00	1	6.7
	Total	15	100.0

2. The Old Testament is also about the faithfulness of the people in response to God, then and now.

Of the participants, one indicated that they strongly disagree (6.7%), two indicated that they disagree (13.3%), two indicated that they were undecided/unknown (13.3%), nine indicated that they agree (60.0%), and one indicated that they strongly agree (6.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7
Disagree	2	13.3
Undecided/Unknown	2	13.3
Agree	9	60.0
Strongly Agree	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0

3. In the New Testament, Pauline theology in particular, the central notion of generosity is found in Jesus himself.

Of the participants, one indicated that they disagree (6.7%), five indicated that they were undecided/unknown (33.3%), five indicated that they agree (33.3%), and four indicated that they strongly agree (26.7%).

		Frequency	Percent
	Disagree	1	6.7
	Undecided/Unkno	5	33.3
	Agree	5	33.3
	Strongly Agree	4	26.7
	Total	15	100.0

4. Extravagant generosity requires addressing all of the aspects and dimensions of life in the ministry of the CUMC as an important and necessary part of our faithfulness in response to God.

Of the participants, three indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), nine indicated that they agree (60.0%), and three indicated that they strongly agree (13.3%).

		Frequency	Percent
	Undecided/Unkno	3	20.0
	Agree	9	60.0
	Strongly Agree	3	20.0
	Total	15	100.0

5. The Bible as a whole pays more attention to the care of poor and downtrodden people than comfortable well-to-do people.

Of the participants, four indicated that they disagree (26.7%), one indicated that they were undecided/unknown (6.7%), eight indicated that they agree 53.3%), and two indicated that they strongly agree (13.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	4	26.7
Undecided/Unkno	1	6.7
Agree	8	53.3
Strongly Agree	2	13.3
Total	15	100.0

THEOLOGICAL

1. Extravagant generosity in Paul's theology was necessary for "equality" and "fairness among the most needy.

Of the participants, one indicated that they strongly disagree (6.7%), seven indicated that they were undecided/unknown (46.7%), and seven indicated that they agree (46.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7
Undecided/Unkno	7	46.7
Agree	7	46.7
Total	15	100.0

2. Generosity of the heart is the beginning of other forms of generous actions and relationships.

Of the participants seven indicated that they agree (46.7%), and eight indicated that they strongly agree (53.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	7	46.7

	Strongly Agree	8	53.3
	Total	15	100.0

3. Study of the Bible is for spiritual edification, and just as importantly, for understanding and faithful participation in what God is creating, redeeming and sustaining in the 21st century.

Of the participants, one indicated that they were undecided/unknown (6.7%), seven indicated that they agree (46.7%), and seven indicated that they strongly agree (46.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Undecided/Unkno	1	6.7
Agree	7	46.7
Strongly Agree	7	46.7
Total	15	100.0

4. Generosity is always about what God/Christ/Holy Spirit is doing and how we the believers respond.

Of the participants, one indicated that they disagree (6.7%), two indicated that they were undecided/unknown (13.3%), six indicated that they agree (40.0%), and six indicated that they strongly agree (40.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	6.7
Undecided/Unkno	2	13.3
Agree	6	40.0
Strongly Agree	6	40.0
Total	15	100.0

5. Since we cannot completely know the mind of God, theological interpretation in accordance with the many works, signs and wonders is what we must rely on to the best of our ability.

Of the participants, one indicated that they strongly disagree (6.7%), two indicated that they disagree (13.3%), two indicated that they were undecided/unknown (13.3%), six indicated that they agree (40.0%), and four indicated that they strongly agree (26.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7
Disagree	2	13.3
Undecided/Unknown	2	13.3
Agree	6	40.0
Strongly Agree	4	26.7
Total	15	88.2

SOCIOLOGICAL

1. Our action as faithful Christians for justice and equality in community and society is an important means by which God's generosity is extended to the faithful and those of other faiths the world.

Of the participants, ten indicated that they were agree (66.7%), and five indicated that they agree (33.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	10	66.7
Strongly Agree	5	33.3
Total	15	100.0

2. Paying apportionments designated for missions beyond our local congregation and community should be reduced.

Of the participants, four indicated that they strongly agree (26.7%), five indicated that they disagree (33.3%), five indicated that they were undecided/unknown (33.3%), and one indicated that they agree (6.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	4	26.7
Disagree	5	33.3
Undecided/Unkno	5	33.3
Agree	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0

3. In the Bible generosity relates to the personal and social dimensions of life including spiritual, temporal, political, economic, and cultural aspects.

Of the participants, five indicated that they were undecided/unknown (33.3%), eight indicated that they agree (53.3%), and two indicated that they strongly agree (13.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Undecided/Unkno	5	33.3
Agree	8	53.3
Strongly Agree	2	13.3
Total	15	100.0

4. Christian stewardship requires direct participation in sustaining the natural environment, which God has created and given us responsibility to provide for its care.

Of the participants, nine indicated that they agree (60.0%), and six indicated that they strongly agree (40.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	9	60.0
Strongly Agree	6	40.0
Total	15	100.0

5. Extravagant generosity that truly seeks justice, “equality” and “fairness” in human social relations must always work to correct the disparities of wealth and poverty in a 21st century world where most people are forced to survive on less than two dollars a day

Of the participants, three indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), ten indicated that they agree (66.7%), and two indicated that they strongly agree (13.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Undecided/Unknown	3	20.0
Agree	10	66.7
Strongly Agree	2	13.3
Total	15	100.0

Post Test Results

1. I feel a heavy burden of obligation to pledge and give to my church.

Of the participants, two indicated that they strongly disagree (13.3%), six indicated that they disagree (40.0%), two indicated that they were undecided/unknown (13.3%), one indicated that they agree (6.7%), and four indicated that they strongly agree (26.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	13.3
Disagree	6	40.0
Undecided/Unkno	2	13.3
Agree	1	6.7
Strongly Agree	4	26.7
Total	15	100.0

2. I would give more generously of my time, talents and financial resources if my church had significant needs to be faithful and effective in ministry.

Of the participants, two indicated that they disagree (13.3%) one indicated that they were undecided/unknown (6.7%), and ten indicated that they agree (66.7%) and two indicated that they strongly agree (13.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	13.3
Undecided/Unknow	1	6.7
Agree	10	66.7
Strongly Agree	2	13.3
Total	15	100.0

3. If everyone gave as I do, sacrificial giving would not be necessary for anyone.

Of the participants, eight indicated that they disagree (53.4%), three indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), two indicated that they agree (13.3%), and two indicated that they strongly agree (13.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree		
Disagree	8	53.4
Undecided/Unkno	3	20.0
Agree	2	13.3
Strongly Agree	2	13.3
Total	15	100.0

4. Soliciting pledges to encourage annual giving is not necessary any more. If everyone gave as I do, sacrificial giving would not be necessary for anyone.

Of the participants, three indicated that they strongly disagree (20.0%), nine indicated that they disagree (60.0%), one indicated that they were undecided/unknown (6.7%) and two indicated that they agree (13.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	20.0
Disagree	9	60.0
Undecided/Unknow	1	6.7
Agree	2	13.3
Total	15	100.0

5. The increasing demand for time, energy and money for my church is overwhelming me and other members of the CUMC.

Of the participants, four indicated that they strongly disagree (26.7%), eight indicated that they disagree (53.3%), three indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), and none indicated that they agree or strongly agree.

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	4	26.7
Disagree	8	53.3
Undecided/Unkno	3	20.0
Total	15	100.0

6. Since God is faithful to give me abundant life, I should joyfully give to support the ministry of my church with whatever gifts are needed.

Of the participants, six indicated that they agree (46.7%), and nine indicated that they strongly agree (40.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	6	40.0
Strongly Agree	9	60.0
Total	15	100.0

7. Our church is more focused on God's generous abundance to us than our lack of resources.

Of the participants, one indicated that they strongly disagree (6.7%), three indicated that they disagree (20.0%), three indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), six indicated that they agree (40.0%) and 2 indicated that they strongly agree (13.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7
Disagree	3	20.0
Undecided/Unkno	3	20.0
Agree	6	40.0
Strongly Agree	2	13.3
Total	15	100

8. My church consistently supports ministry with an over-abundance of material offerings.

Of the participants, one indicated that they strongly disagree (6.7%), seven indicated that they disagree (46.7%), four indicated that they were undecided/unknown (26.7%), and three indicated that they agree (20.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7
Disagree	7	46.7
Undecided/Unkno	4	26.7
Agree	3	20.0
Total	15	100.0

9. I give generously and cannot increase the amount.

Of the participants, three indicated that they strongly disagree (20.0%), five indicated that they disagree (33.3%), four indicated that they were undecided/unknown (26.7%), two indicated that they agree (13.3%) and one indicated that they strong agree (6.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	20.0
Disagree	5	33.3
Undecided/Unk	4	26.7
Agree	2	13.3
Strongly Agree	1	6.7
Total	15	100

10. The biblical concept of the “tithe” is not necessary in the 21st century.

Of the participants, three indicated that they strongly disagree (20.0%), five indicated that they disagree (33.3%), three indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), three indicated that they agree (20.0%) and one indicated that they strongly agree (6.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	20.0
Disagree	5	33.3
Undecided/Unk	3	20.0
Agree	3	20.0
Strongly Agree	1	6.7
Total	15	100.0

BIBLICAL

1. In the Old Testament (Book of Exodus in particular), “liberation,” “law,” “covenant,” and the importance of building a “tent of meeting” (later a temple) all have implications for God’s generous faithfulness to the people then, and to the “People of God” at CUMC now.

Of the participants, one indicated that they disagree (6.7%), nine indicated that they agree (60.0%), and five indicated that they strongly agree 33.3%).

		Frequency	Percent
	Disagree	1	6.7
	Agree	9	60.0
	Strongly Agree	5	33.3
	Total	15	
			100.0

2. The Old Testament is also about the faithfulness of the people in response to God, then and now.

Of the participants, one indicated that they disagree (6.7%), ten indicated that they agree (60.0%), and four indicated that they strongly agree (26.7%).

		Frequency	Percent
	Disagree	1	6.7
	Agree	10	66.7
	Strongly Agree	4	26.7
	Total	15	100.0

3. In the New Testament, Pauline theology in particular, the central notion of generosity is found in Jesus himself.

Of the participants, nine indicated that they agree (60.0%), and six indicated that they strongly agree (40.0%).

		Frequency	Percent
	Agree	9	60.0
	Strongly Agree	6	40.0
	Total	15	100.0

4. Extravagant generosity requires addressing all of the aspects and dimensions of life in the ministry of the CUMC as an important and necessary part of our faithfulness in response to God.

Of the participants, one indicated that they disagree (6.7%), one indicated that they were undecided/unknown (20.0%), four indicated that they agree (26.7%), and nine indicated that they strongly agree (60.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	6.7
Undecided/Unkno	1	6.7
Agree	4	26.7
Strongly Agree	9	60.0
Total	15	100.0

5. The Bible as a whole pays more attention to the care of poor and downtrodden people than comfortable well-to-do people.

Of the participants, seven indicated that they disagree (46.7%), one indicated that they were undecided/unknown (6.7%), one indicated that they agree (6.7%), and six indicated that they strongly agree (40.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	7	46.7
Undecided/Unkno	1	6.7
Agree	1	6.7
Strongly Agree	6	40.0
Total	15	100.1

THEOLOGICAL

1. Extravagant generosity in Paul's theology was necessary for "equality" and "fairness among the most needy."

Of the participants, two indicated that they disagree (13.3%), two indicated that they were undecided/unknown (13.3%), and six indicated that they agree (40.0%) and five indicated that they strongly agree (33.3%) .

		Frequency	Percent
	Disagree	2	13.3
	Undecided/Unkno	2	13.3
	Agree	6	40.0
	Strongly Agree	5	33.3
	Total	15	100.0

2. Generosity of the heart is the beginning of other forms of generous actions and relationships.

Of the participants six indicated that they agree (40.0%), and nine indicated that they strongly agree (60.0%).

		Frequency	Percent
	Agree	6	40.0
	Strongly	9	60.0
	Total	15	100.0

3. Study of the Bible is for spiritual edification, and just as importantly, for understanding and faithful participation in what God is creating, redeeming and sustaining in the 21st century.

Of the participants, six indicated that they agree (40.0%), and nine indicated that they strongly agree (60.0%).

		Frequency	Percent
	Agree	6	40.0
	Strongly Agree	9	60.0
	Total	15	100.0

4. Generosity is always about what God/Christ/Holy Spirit is doing and how we the believers respond.

Of the participants, one indicated that they disagree (6.7%), none indicated that they were undecided/unknown, seven indicated that they agree (46.7%), and seven indicated that they strongly agree (46.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	1	6.7
Agree	7	46.7
Strongly Agree	7	46.7
Total	15	100.1

5. Since we cannot completely know the mind of God, theological interpretation in accordance with the many works, signs and wonders is what we must rely on to the best of our ability.

Of the participants, one indicated that they strongly disagree (6.7%), one indicated that they disagree (6.7%), two indicated that they were undecided/unknown (13.3%), six indicated that they agree (40.0%), and five indicated that they strongly agree (33.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	6.7
Disagree	1	6.7
Undecided/Unknown	2	13.3
Agree	6	40.0
Strongly Agree	5	33.3
Total	15	100.0

SOCIOLOGICAL

1. Our action as faithful Christians for justice and equality in community and society is an important means by which God's generosity is extended to the faithful and those of other faiths the world.

Of the participants, seven indicated that they agree (46.7%), and eight indicated that they strongly agree (53.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	7	46.7
Strongly Agree	8	53.3
Total	15	100.0

2. Paying apportionments designated for missions beyond our local congregation and community should be reduced.

Of the participants, three indicated that they strongly disagree (20.0%), and twelve indicated that they disagree (80.0%).

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	20.0
Disagree	12	80.0
Total	15	100.0

3. In the Bible generosity relates to the personal and social dimensions of life including spiritual, temporal, political, economic, and cultural aspects.

Of the participants, seven indicated that they agree (46.7%), and eight indicated that they strongly agree (53.3%).

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	7	46.7
Strongly Agree	8	53.3
Total	15	100.0

4. Christian stewardship requires direct participation in sustaining the natural environment, which God has created and given us responsibility to provide for its care.

Of the participants, nine indicated that they agree (60.0%), and six indicated that they strongly agree (40.0%).

		Frequency	Percent
	Agree	9	60.0
	Strongly Agree	6	40.0
	Total	15	100.0

5. Extravagant generosity that truly seeks justice, “equality” and “fairness” in human social relations must always work to correct the disparities of wealth and poverty in a 21st century world where most people are forced to survive on less than two dollars a day

Of the participants, three indicated that they disagree (13.3%), six indicated that they agree (40.0%), and seven indicated that they strongly agree (46.7%).

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	13.3
Agree	6	40.0
Strongly Agree	7	46.7
Total	15	100.0

Pre and Post Test Analysis

In evaluating the data, it indicated that sufficient changes occurred within the mindset of the fifteen participants that were engaged with the study. Specifically, in examining the first question: I feel a heavy burden of obligation to pledge and give to the church. In the pre-test 20.0% strongly disagreed, 13.3% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided or unknown, 33.3% agreed and 20.0% strongly agreed. The post-test results

indicated that 13.3% strongly disagreed, 40.0% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided or unknown and 6.7% agreed and 26.7% strongly agreed. Therefore, the obligation and burden to pledge and give to the church decreased by 19.9%.

The second question, asked if participants would give more generously of their time, talents and financial resources of the church had significant needs to be faithful and effective in ministry. The pre-test results indicated that 13.3% strongly disagreed, 33.3% disagreed, 20.0% were unknown or undecided and 33.3% agreed. The post-test results indicated that 13.3% disagreed 6.7% were unknown or undecided, 66.7% agreed and 13.3% strongly agreed. Therefore, the participants were more inclined to give of their time, talents and finances by 46.7% if the church had a significant need to be faithful and effective in ministry.

The third question was comparative in nature and inquired if others gave as the participants, sacrificial giving would not be necessary. In the pre-test, 6.7% strongly disagreed, 20.0% disagreed, 40.0% were undecided or unknown, 20.0% agreed, and 13.3% strongly agreed. In the post-test 53.4% disagreed, 20% undecided or unknown, 13.3% agreed and 13.3% strongly agreed. The data indicated that the participants were not adequately giving to alleviate the requirement for sacrificial giving.

Question four reiterated question three, by asking if pledges were solicited on an annual basis. In the pre-test 40.0% strongly disagreed, 53.3% disagreed, and 6.7% agreed. In the post-test 20.0% strongly disagreed, 60.0% disagreed, 6.7% were undecided or unknown and 13.3% agreed. There was one participant that changed from disagree to undecided/unknown, which results in a change, but the change was inconclusive.

Question five asked with the increasing demand for time, energy and money for the

church, it is overwhelming the membership. In the pre-test 13.3% strongly disagreed, 53.3% disagreed, 26.7% were undecided or unknown and 6.7% agreed. In the post-test, 26.7% strongly disagreed, 53.3% disagreed and 20.0% were undecided or unknown. Therefore, 80.0% of the population believes that the membership was being overwhelmed by being asked to give of their time, energy and money.

Question six asked if membership should give to support the ministry with whatever gifts were needed. The pre-test indicated 6.7% disagreed, 6.7% were undecided or unknown, 46.7% agreed and 40.0% strongly agreed. In the post-test, 100% agreed. Therefore, the participants believed that membership should fully support the needs of the church. Question seven asked if the church was more focused on God's generous abundance given to them than on the lack of resources. The pre-test indicated that 40% disagreed, 33.3% were undecided or unknown and 26.7% agreed. The post-test indicated that 26.7% disagreed, 20% undecided or unknown and 53.3% agreed. Therefore, 26.7% changed their belief on the focus of abundance of giving.

The eighth question asked if the church consistently supports ministry was an over-abundance of material offering. The pre-test indicated 60.0% disagreed, 26.7% undecided or unknown and 13.3% agreed. The post-test indicated that 53.4% disagreed, 26.7% undecided or unknown and 20.0% agreed. Therefore, the participant agreement increased by 6.7%. Question nine asked if the participant gives generously and if they cannot increase the amount of giving. The pre-test results indicated that 33.0% disagreed, 26.7% were undecided or unknown and 40% agreed. The post-test indicated that 53.3% disagreed, 26.7% were undecided or unknown and 20.0% agreed. Therefore, the participants believed they could give more by 23.0%. Question ten addressed the

relevancy of tithing concept in the twenty-first century. The pre-test indicated that 60% disagreed, 20% were undecided or unknown and 20% agreed. The post-test indicated that 53.3% disagreed, 20% undecided or unknown and 26.7% agreed. Therefore, the relevancy of the tithing concept in the twenty-century shifted by 13.4%.

When evaluating the biblical concept, the first question was in the Old Testament (Book of Exodus in particular), “liberation,” “law,” “covenant,” and the importance of building a “tent of meeting” (later a temple) all have implications for God’s generous faithfulness to the people then, and to the “People of God” at CUMC now. In the pre-test 6.7% disagreed, 20% was undecided or unknown and 73.4% agreed. In the post-test 6.7% disagreed and 93.3% agreed. Therefore, of the 20% that was undecided, their mindset changed to agree with the biblical paradigm. The second question asked if the Old Testament is also about the faithfulness of the people in response to God, then and now. The pre-test indicated 20% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided or unknown and 66.7% agreed. The post-test indicated that 6.7% disagreed and 93.4% agreed. Therefore, participant who was initially undecided or unknown changed their mindset to agree with the biblical paradigm.

The third question reflected on the New Testament Pauline theology and asked if the central notion of generosity was found in Jesus. The pre-test indicated that 6.7% disagreed, 33.3% was undecided and 60% agreed. The post-test indicated 100% agreement. Therefore, the participants totally agreed that Jesus represented the notion of generous giving. The fourth question asked if extravagant generosity requires addressing all of the aspects and dimensions of life in the ministry of the CUMC as an important and necessary part of our faithfulness in response to God. The pre-test indicated that 20%

were undecided or unknown and 80% agreed. The post-test indicated 6.7% disagreed, 6.7% were undecided or unknown and 86.7% agreed. Therefore, one participant changed from being undecided or unknown to agreement, but one remained undecided or unknown. The final question in the biblical category asked if the Bible as a whole pays more attention to the care of poor and downtrodden people than comfortable well-to-do people? The pre-test indicated that 26.7% disagreed, 6.7% were undecided or unknown and 66.6% agreed. The post-test indicated 46.7% disagreed, 6.7% were undecided or unknown and 46.6% agreed. Therefore, the participants disagreed by 20% following the post-test.

In examining the data from the theological perspective the question was asked: If extravagant generosity in Paul's theology was necessary for "equality" and "fairness among the most needy? The pre-test indicated that 6.7% disagreed, 46.7% were undecided or unknown and 46.7% agreed. The post-test indicated that 13.3% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided or unknown and 73.3% agreed. The group changed their mindset to agree by 26.6%. The second question asked if generosity of the heart is the beginning of other forms of generous actions and relationships? The pre-test indicated that the participants agreed by 100%. The post-test indicated that the participants agreed by 100%. There was no change in the data. The third question asked if study of the Bible is for spiritual edification, and just as importantly, for understanding and faithful participation in what God is creating, redeeming and sustaining in the twenty-first century? The pre-test indicated that 6.7% were undecided or unknown, 93.4% agreed. The post-test indicated that 100% agreed. The one undecided participant agreed after the completion of the Bible Study class.

Question four asked if generosity is always about what God/Christ/Holy Spirit is doing and how we the believers respond? The pre-test indicated that 6.7% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided or unknown and 80.0% agreed. The post-test indicated that 6.7% disagreed, 6.7% were undecided or unknown and 93.4% agreed. One participant (6.7%) changed their mindset from undecided or unknown to agree. Question five asked, since we cannot completely know the mind of God, theological interpretation in accordance with the many works, signs and wonders is what we must rely on to the best of our ability? The pre-test indicated that 20% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided or unknown and 66.7% agreed. The post-test indicated that 13.4% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided or unknown and 73.3% agreed. Therefore, a 20% change in mindset occurred.

In the sociological section, the first question asked if our action as faithful Christians for justice and equality in community and society is an important means by which God's generosity is extended to the faithful and those of other faiths the world? The pre-test indicated that the participants agreed 100.0%. The post-test indicated that 100.0% agreed. Although the percentages remained the same, there was a shift in mindset from agree to strongly agree. The second question addressed mission work by asking if paying apportionments designated for missions beyond our local congregation and community should be reduced? The pre-test indicated that 60% disagreed, 33.3% were undecided or unknown and 6.7% agreed. The post-test indicated that 100% disagree. Therefore, the group unanimously agreed to paying apportionments designated for missions beyond the local church and community.

In question three, it asked, if in the Bible generosity relates to the personal and social dimensions of life including spiritual, temporal, political, economic, and cultural

aspects? The pre-test indicated that 33.3% were undecided or unknown, 66.6% agreed. In the post-test, the participants were 100% in agreement. The fourth question addressed Christian stewardship requires direct participation in sustaining the natural environment, which God has created and given us responsibility to provide for its care? The pre-test indicated 100% agreement and the post-test indicated 100% agreement. The fifth question asked if extravagant generosity that truly seeks justice, “equality” and “fairness” in human social relations must always work to correct the disparities of wealth and poverty in a twenty-first century world where most people are forced to survive on less than two dollars a day? The pre-test indicated that 20% were undecided or unknown and 80% agreed. The post-test indicated 13.3% disagree and 86.7% agreed.

Summary, Reflections, Conclusion

This study was a baseline study to determine the understanding of a diverse sample of the Colesville membership as it relates to giving to the church. Some of the participants expressed they had learned something new from the Bible studies and thought the studies would be helpful for the entire membership. It is clear that the annual pledge campaign and tithing emphasis is important to the study participants. Tithing is many times heard and viewed as an onerous obligation and its appeal is dreaded, however it appears an appeal for members to give freely and generously in response to God's gracious generosity to humanity is more palatable to the participants.

From this research, if there is going to be a change in the upward giving patterns of the membership, there must be a continuous program of holistic stewardship education of time, talent treasure and financial resources as well as Bible studies and sermons on the subject of giving. It would be important to begin a twelve-month stewardship

program (i.e. A Twelve-Month Plan for Stewardship in the Local Church by Herb Mather). As a part of the stewardship program, it would be important to include a component for personal finance management for persons who may desire to give, but are in debt that prohibits them from giving. In addition, it is apparent to this researcher that more sharing of information of the vision, mission and ministry of the church in relationship to finances will be important.

It would be beneficial to do a study on the church's budget, income and expenditures to determine if the finances are aligning with the vision, mission and ministry of the church. If not, the church should begin a process to bring the finances into alignment as well as cultivate the notion of a percentage of the budget being earmarked for the church's outward focused missions which the church values. It would also be helpful to do a comparison with other churches of the same size within the United Methodist connection to determine how this church measures in comparison.

It would be important to have more information sharing sessions with the membership on how the church is being faithful over the resources that have been given. This should take the form of more emphasis on sharing how the resources given are impacting the vision, mission and ministry of the church and impacting people's lives. There should be consideration to moving to a narrative budget with pictures in addition to the "line item" budget. The membership seems to be more interested in knowing how their giving impacts people in the community and mission and ministry projects that impact people positively.

APPENDIX A
LETTER TO COLESVILLE MEMBERS



Colesville United Methodist Church

52 Randolph Road, Silver Spring, MD
20904

Phone 301.384.1941 Fax 301.879.8542

www.cumc.org

Email: churchoffice@cumc.org

Rev. Michael W. Armstrong
Pastor

Dear Colesville members,

Let me first of all thank all of the members of Colesville United Methodist Church for continuing to provide an enriching ministry setting in which to do ministry. I want to convey my deepest thanks and appreciation to all who have expressed and shown an interest in my Doctor of Ministry research project. In addition, let me thank those who were able to come to the informational session on Sunday, February 28, 2016, and in advance, I want to thank all who will consider being a participant in this study.

The Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) degree which I am pursuing at United Theological Seminary is a professional doctorate aimed at individuals involved in some form of ministry, and is designed to enhance the individuals' ministry in a certain context. The degree is usually pursued in one of the areas of applied theology (i.e. missions, evangelism, pastoral counseling, homiletics, spiritual formation, church growth, church administration, or church leadership). My research project initially grew out of a concern for stewardship in another ministry setting, especially when the 2008 economic downturn took place, but it continued with an interest in exploring how the church should do stewardship now and in the future.

The research project is titled: *"Creating a Spirit of Generosity: Teaching the Components of Giving."* I have included the abstract of the project at the bottom of this letter. The project will consist of five Bible studies with a pre-test and post-test over a two day period. Do not let that scare you off! The pre-test is designed to capture what you know before the Bible study information is shared, the post-test is designed to test what you have learned from the Bible study and any new impressions you may have gained about the subject matter.

This is an open letter requesting your participation in the five Bible studies. The scheduled time for the classes will be Saturday, March 12, 2016 from 9:00 to 12:30 and Sunday, March 13, 2016, shortly after church service for about 2 hours. I would like to have between 12-20 participants, but will take all volunteers.

Please let me explain the short advance notice given. I was encouraged by my D.Min. advisors to move up my timeline in order to attempt to graduate in May 2016. Thus, I am simply following their advice. Please email me at: revmwarmstrong@gmail.com, or call me at (301) 996-0930, if you are interested in more information and/or are able to participate in the Bible studies this coming weekend. Please *do not* call the church office as I do not want this project to interfere with the church's normal operations. I want to solicit all of your prayers for not only this project, but my continued ministry at Colesville UMC. And thank you all for all you do in ministry at Colesville and to build the Kingdom of God.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael W. Armstrong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Rev. Michael W. Armstrong

Pastor

Colesville United Methodist Church

APPENDIX B
PRE AND POST TEST

Creating a Spirit of Generosity: The Components of Giving

Biblical, Theological and Practical Perspectives

Questionnaire #2

Colesville United Methodist Church, Silver Spring, MD
Reverend Michael Armstrong, Senior Pastor

DEMOGRAPHIC IDENTITY (circle one letter on each question that identifies you)

Assigned Number: { }

Age: a) 20 – 34 b) 35 – 49 c) 50 – 64 d) 65 - 79 e) 80+

Race/Ethnicity: a) African American/Black b) Asian American/Pacific Islander
c) Hispanic/Latino/a d) Native American
e) Caucasian/White f) Other

Gender: a) Female b) Male

Education: a) High Schoolb) Craft/Trade Certificate
c) 2-year college d) 4-yr Undergraduate degree
d) Masters degree e) Doctoral degree
f) Other _____

Income:

a) <\$ 22,000 per year	b) \$ 23,000 - \$ 39,000 per year
c) \$ 40,000 - \$59,000	d) \$ 60,000 - \$ 79,000 per year
e) \$ 80,000 - \$99,000	f) \$100,000 - \$149,000 per year
g) >\$150,000	

Length of Membership @ CUMC: a) 1 – 5 yrs b) 6 -10 yrs c) 11 – 20 yrs
d) 21 – 35 yrs e) 36- 49 yrs f) 50+ yrs

PRACTICAL (circle one response following each question)

11. I feel a heavy burden of obligation to pledge and give to my church.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided/Unknown Disagree Strongly Disagree

12. I would give more generously of my time, talents and financial resources if my church had significant needs to be faithful and effective in ministry.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided/Unknown Disagree Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--

13. If everyone gave as I do, sacrificial giving would not be necessary for anyone.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

14. Soliciting pledges to encourage annual giving is not necessary any more.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

15. The increasing demand for time, energy and money for my church is overwhelming me and other members of the CUMC.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

16. Since God is faithful to give me abundant life, I should joyfully give to support the ministry of my church with whatever gifts are needed.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

17. Our church is more focused on God's generous abundance to us than our lack of resources.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

18. My church consistently supports ministry with an over-abundance of material offerings.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

19. I give generously and cannot increase the amount.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

20. The biblical concept of the "tithe" is not necessary in the 21st century.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

BIBLICAL (circle one response following each question)

6. In the Old Testament (Book of Exodus in particular), "liberation," "law," "covenant," and the importance of building a "tent of meeting" (later a temple) all have implications for God's generous faithfulness to the people then, and to the "People of God" at CUMC now.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. The Old Testament is also about the faithfulness of the people in response to God, then and now.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

8. In the New Testament, Pauline theology in particular, the central notion of generosity is found in Jesus himself.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9. Extravagant generosity requires addressing all of the aspects and dimensions of life in the ministry of the CUMC as an important and necessary part of our faithfulness in response to God.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

10. The Bible as a whole pays more attention to the care of poor and downtrodden people than comfortable well-to-do people.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

THEOLOGICAL (circle one response following each question)

6. Extravagant generosity in Paul's theology was necessary for "equality" and "fairness among the most needy."

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Generosity of the heart is the beginning of other forms of generous actions and relationships.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. Study of the Bible is for spiritual edification, and just as importantly, for understanding and faithful participation in what God is creating, redeeming and sustaining in the 21st century.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

8. Generosity is always about what God/Christ/Holy Spirit is doing and how we the believers respond.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9. Since we cannot completely know the mind of God, theological interpretation in accordance with the many works, signs and wonders is what we must rely on to the best of our ability.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

SOCIOLOGICAL (circle one response following each question)

6. Our action as faithful Christians for justice and equality in community and society is an important means by which God's generosity is extended to the faithful and those of other faiths the world.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. Paying apportionments designated for missions beyond our local congregation and community should be reduced.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

--	--	--	--

8. In the Bible generosity relates to the personal and social dimensions of life including spiritual, temporal, political, economic, and cultural aspects.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9. Christian stewardship requires direct participation in sustaining the natural environment which God has created and given us responsibility to provide for its care.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

10. Extravagant generosity that truly seeks justice, "equality" and "fairness" in human social relations must always work to correct the disparities of wealth and poverty in a 21st century world where most people are forced to survive on less than two dollars a day

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided/Unknown	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Comments:

APPENDIX C
BIBLE STUDIES

BIBLE STUDY #1**“The Generous Contributions”****Outline**

- I. Introduction
- II. Scripture – Exodus 35:1-36:7
 - a. Overview of the passage
 - b. Importance due to length of topic
 - c. Significance due to the position within the book
 - d. Structure of the passage including the contributions, construction, consecration and the condescension
 - e. Israel’s Offering
 - f. The Characteristics of Israel’s offering
 - i. Offering was voluntary
 - ii. Willing
 - iii. Given in abundance
 - iv. Gifts were unanimous
 - v. Gifts were proportionate
 - vi. Gifts were material and technical
 - vii. Gifts were of the highest quality
- III. Conclusion

BIBLE STUDY #2**“Learning to Be Generous in Giving”****Outline**

- I. Introduction
- II. Scripture – 2 Corinthians 8:1-15
 - a. Gaining an understanding of how money is portrayed in the Bible
 - b. Historical perspective of the Corinthian Church
 - c. Structure of the passage including the contributions, construction, consecration and the condescension
 - d. The Macedonian Model of Generosity
 - e. The ordeal of the Macedonians – deep poverty
 - f. Exemplary Giving of the Macedonians
 - i. Gave out of poverty
 - ii. Gave voluntarily
 - iii. Gave from grateful hearts
 - iv. Gave to promote unity
 - v. Gave joyfully
- III. The Master: Jesus Christ (8:8-9)
- IV. Finish What You Started (8:10-12)
- V. The Principles of Equality and Reciprocity (8:13-15)
- VI. Riches verses the poor (Proverbs 22:7)
- VII. Lessons learned from the giving model
 - a. Take baby steps as you mature in giving, but grow constantly
 - b. Money is a way to partner with other believers
 - c. Money is directly linked to the needs within communities
 - d. Giving creates opportunities for fellowship
- VIII. Comparison between Exodus and 2 Corinthians
- IX. Conclusion

BIBLE STUDY #3**“Stewardship It All Belongs to God”****Outline**

- I. Introduction
- II. Scripture – Matthew 25:13-30
- III. The Principle of Ownership
- IV. The Principle of Responsibility
- V. The Principle of Accountability
 - a. The element of time
 - b. The element of money
 - c. The element of work
 - d. The element of profit
- VII. The Principle of Reward
- IX. Conclusion

BIBLE STUDY #4

“Stewardship It’s a Matter of the Heart: Blessed Babies and A Miserable Millionaire”

Outline

- I. Introduction
- II. Scripture – Luke 18: 15-30
- III. The structure and background of the scripture
- IV. The Blessing of the Babies – 18:15-17
- V. The Rich Young Ruler – 18:18-30
- VI. Words to Perplexed Disciples – 18:24-34
- VII. Conclusion

BIBLE STUDY #5**“Stewardship: What are We Going to Do About It?”****Outline**

- I. Introduction
- II. John Wesley on Stewardship, *The Use of Money*
 - a. Gain all you can
 - b. Save all you can
 - c. Give all you can
- III. Debt Free Living – Proverbs 22:7
- IV. Four Reasons Why People End Up with Unsustainable Debt
 - a. Ignorance
 - b. Impulse
 - c. Indulgence
 - d. Immaturity
- VI. Biblical Principles on Debt
 - a. Debt Leads to Bondage
 - b. Devise a Plan to Get Out of Debt
 - c. Control or Eliminate the Use of Credit Cards
 - d. Avoid Surety
 - e. Commit to Repaying All Loans
 - f. Check Your Credit Report
- VII. Saving for the Future
- VIII. How to Save
- IX. Different Types of Donations
 - a. Charitable Bequests
 - b. Gifts of Life Insurance
 - c. Gifts of Real Estate
 - d. Gifts of Listed Securities
 - e. Charitable Annuities
 - f. Charitable Remainder Trusts
- X. Conclusion

APPENDIX D
COMMENTS ON CUMC QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTION #33 - COMMENTS ON CUMC QUESTIONNAIRE

No comments made on Pre-test questionnaire; Six (6) comments made on Post-test questionnaire

1	This was a very good [study] and has direct implication on stewardship at CUMC. We will need to do more [to] show the “vision” of God in our work in the church as well as the direct benefit people in our and greater community.
2.	No comments
3.	No comments
4.	Some questions very wordy requiring 2-3 readings to get full meaning.
5.	Great classes!
6.	No comments
7.	No comments
8.	No comments
9.	Consider expanding these lessons to the entire congregation.
10.	Thanks for an enriching study.
11.	No comments
12.	No comments
13.	Thank you.
14.	No comments
15	No comments

code: 1 = 6 comments

2 = 9 no comments

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alcorn, Randy. *Money Possessions and Eternity*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 2003.
- Althaus, Paul. *The Theology of Martin Luther*. Philadelphia, PA Fortress Press, 1966.
- America's Story from America's Library. "Andrew Carnegie, Philanthropist." America's Story from America's Library. Accessed February 28, 2016.
http://www.americaslibrary.gov/aa/carnegie/aa_carnegie_phil_3.html/.
- Amerson, Melvin. *Stewardship in African-American Churches: A New Paradigm*. Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 2006.
- Archer, G. L. *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1998. Kindle.
- Ball-Kilbourne, Gary L. "The Christian as Steward in John Wesley's Theological Ethics." *Quarterly Review* 4, no.1 (Spring 1984): 43-54.
- Batson, C. Daniel, Kathryn C. Oleson, Joy L. Weeks, Sean P. Healy, Penny J. Reeves, Patrick Jennings, and Thomas Brown. "Religious Prosocial Motivation: Is it Altruistic or Egoistic?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 57 (1989): 873-884.
- Bekkers, René, and Pamala Wiepking. "Understanding Philanthropy: A Review of 50 Years of Theory and Research." *In Progress*. Accessed March 12, 2016.
<http://www.fss.uu.nl/soc/homes/bekkers/understanding>.
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. "What We Do." Accessed March 12, 2016.
<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/What-We-Do>.
- Boudoin, Joyce. *God's Finances, A Matter of the Heart*. Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2005.
- Bremmer, Robert H. *American Philanthropy*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1988.

- Brueggemann, Walter. *Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries: Deuteronomy*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2011. Kindle.
- Bryant, W. Keith, Kaekyung Jeon-Slaughter, Hyojin Kang, and Aaron Tax. "Participation in Philanthropic Activities: Donating Money and Time." *The Journal of Consumer Policy* 26 (2003): 43-73.
- Cameron, Barry L. *Contagious Generosity: The Key to Continuous Blessing*. Joplin, MO: Heartspring Publishing, 2006.
- Carson, D. A., R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, and G. J. Wenham. *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Ed.* Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994.
- Carter, Doug M. *Raising More Than Money: Redefining Generosity Reflecting God's Heart*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishing, 2007.
- Chaves, Mark. "Financing American Religion." *New Directions in Philanthropic Fundraising* 35 (2002): 41-54.
- Christopher, J. Clif. *Not Your Parent's Offering Plate*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2008.
- Collett, Jessica L. and Christopher A. Morrissey. "The Social Psychology of Generosity: The State of Current Interdisciplinary Research." *Science of Generosity* (October 2007).
- Covey, Stephen R. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1989.
- Curious History. "The Origins and History of Gift Giving." Curious History. February 9, 2015. Accessed February 26, 2016. <http://www.curioushistory.com/the-origins-and-history-of-gift-giving/>.
- Deffinbaugh, Robert L. "Concerning Contributions (Exodus 35:1-36:7)." Accessed March 9, 2016, <https://bible.org/seriespage/31-concerning-contributions-exodus-351-367>.
- _____. "Learning to Be Liberal (2 Cor. 8:1-15)." Accessed March 9, 2016. <https://bible.org/seriespage/11-learning-be-liberal-2-cor-81-15>.
- _____. "The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-28)." Accessed March 9, 2016. <https://bible.org/seriespage/27-parable-talents-matthew-2514-30-luke-1912-28>.

- _____. "Blessed Babes and a Miserable Millionaire (Luke 18:15-30)." Accessed March 9, 2016. <https://bible.org/seriespage/57-blessed-babes-and-miserable-millionaire-luke-1815-30>.
- Dunn, James. *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998.
- Durall, Michael. *Beyond the Collection Plate: Overcoming Obstacles to Faithful Giving*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2008.
- East Bay Community Foundation. "Brief History of Researching Philanthropy." East Bay Community Foundation. Accessed February 26, 2016. <http://www.ebcf.org/brief-history-of-researching-philanthropy/>.
- Edersheim, A. *Bible History: Old Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975.
- Friedman, Hershey H. "The Simple Life: The Case Against Ostentation in Jewish Law." Accessed February 26, 2016. <http://www.jlaw.com/Articles/againstosten.html>.
- Fuller, Morris Joseph, and Edward Miall. *Our Title Deeds*. London, UK: Griffith, Farran, Okeden and Welsh, 1890.
- Furnish, Victor Paul. *The Anchor Bible: II Corinthians*. Garden City, NY: DoubleDay & Company, Inc., 1984.
- Garland, D. E. *2 Corinthians*, vol. 29. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999.
- Gasman, Marybeth, and Sibby Anderson-Thompkins. *Fundraising From Black-College Alumni: Successful Strategies for Supporting Alma Mater*. Washington, DC: Council for Advancement and Support of Education, 2003.
- Glasmeier, Amy K. "Living Wage Calculator for Montgomery County, Maryland." *Living Wage Calculator*. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Accessed February 2, 2016. <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/24031>.
- Grace to You. "Second Corinthians." Grace to You. Accessed February 17, 2016. www.gty.org/resources/bible-introductions/MSB47/second-corinthians.
- Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. "A Brief History of Giving." Greater Kansas City Community Foundation. October 25, 2012. Accessed February 26, 2016. <https://www.growyourgiving.org/giving-blog/brief-history-giving>.

- Hall-Russell, Cheryl, and Robert H. Kasberg. *African American Traditions of Giving and Serving: A Midwest Perspective*. Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Center on Philanthropy, 1997.
- Harris, M. J. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005.
- Heitink, Gerben. *Practical Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993.
- Hughes, R. B., and J. C. Laney. *Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001.
- Jakes, T.D. *But I Can't Afford to Tithe!* Dallas TX: T.D. Jakes Enterprise, 1997.
- Jamieson, R., A. R. Fausset, and D. Brown. *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997.
- Jeavons, Thomas H., and Rebekah Burch Basinger. *Growing Giver's Hearts*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995.
- Job, Rueben P. *Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007.
- Keck, Leander. *The New Interpreter's Bible*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1994.
- Kohn, Alfie. *The Brighter Side of Human Nature*. New York, NY: Basic Books, 1992.
- Kneebone, Elizabeth, and Alan Berube. *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America*. Washington, DC: Brookings Press, 2013.
- Lawson, Douglas M. *More Give to Live: How Giving Can Change Your Life*. La Jolla, CA: ALTI Publishing, 2003.
- Lim, Kar Yong. "Generosity from Pauline Perspective: Insights from Paul's Letters to the Corinthians." *Evangelical Review of Theology* 37, no.1 (January 2013).
- Lincoln, C. Eric, and Lawrence H. Mamiya. *The Black Church in the African American Experience*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990.
- Lull, Timothy. *Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989.
- McNamara, Patrick H. *More Than Money: Portrayed of Transformative Stewardship*. Washington, DC: Alban Institute, 1999.

- Maddox, Randy L. *Rethinking Wesley's Theology for Contemporary Methodism*. Nashville, TN: Kings Wood Books, 1998.
- McNeal, Reggie. *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 2003.
- Miller, Dale T. "The Norm of Self-Interest." *American Psychologist* 54 (1999):1053-1060.
- Mitchell, Clifton W., and Michael I. Shuff. "Personality Characteristics of Hospice Volunteers as Measured by Myers-Briggs Type Indicator." *Journal of Personality Assessment* 65 (1995): 521-532.
- Myers, William H. *God's Yes Was Louder Than My No*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1994.
- _____. *The Irresistible Urge to Preach*. New York, NY: Aaron Press, 1992.
- Nelson Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997. Kindle.
- Neyfakh, Leon. "Why We Give to Charity." *Ideas* (December 2011).
- Niebuhr, Richard H. *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry*. New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1956.
- Osborn, N. D., and H. A. Hatton. *A Handbook on Exodus*. New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1999.
- Ortberg, John, Laure Pederson, and Judson Poling, *Giving, Unlocking the Heart of Good Stewardship*. Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 2000.
- Outler, Albert C., and Richard P. Heitzenrater. *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991.
- Owen, Barbara. *Martin Luther Thoughts About Money*. Annapolis, MD, 1999.
- Peel, Bill. "Leadership Is Stewardship." *The High Calling*. Modified December 15, 2008. Accessed March 12, 2016.
<http://www.thehighcalling.org/articles/essay/leadership-stewardship-part-1>.
- Penner, Louis A., Barbara A. Fritzsche, J. Philip Craiger, and Tamara R. Freifeld. "Measuring the Prosocial Personality." *Advances in Personality Assessment*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1995.

- Petty, Janice. *Cultivating Diversity in Fundraising*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2002.
- Powell, Luther P. *Money and the Church*. New York, NY: Association Press, 1962.
- Pressley, Calvin. "Financial Contributions for the Kingdom for the Elect: Giving Patterns in the Black Church." *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising* (Spring 1995).
- Richards, L. O. *The Bible Reader's Companion*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1991.
- Ronsvalle, John and Sylvia Ronsvalle. *Behind the Stained Glass Windows: Money Dynamics in the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996.
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich. *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*. Edinburgh, UK: T & T Clark, 1875.
- Schnase, Robert. *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2007.
- Seymour, H.J. *Design for Fundraising Principles, Patterns and Techniques*. Rockville, MD: Fundraising Institute, A Division of the Raft Group, 1988.
- Simmons, Roberta G. "Presidential Address on Altruism and Sociology." *The Sociological Quarterly* 32:1-22.
- Slaughter, Michael. *Money Matters: Financial Freedom for All God's Churches*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2006.
- Smith, Bradford, Sylvia Shue, Jennifer Lisa Vest, and Joseph Villarreal. *Philanthropy in Communities of Color*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999.
- Smith, J. E. *The Pentateuch*. Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co., 1993.
- Soaries, Jr., DeForest B. *Breaking Free from Financial Slavery*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishers, 2011.
- Spence, H. D. M. and Joseph S. Exell. "2 Corinthians." *The Pulpit Commentary*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1961.
- _____. In the Introduction of "Exodus." *The Pulpit Commentary*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1961.
- Spitz, Reuben T., and John R. MacKinnon. "Predicting Success in Volunteer Community Service." *Psychological Reports* 73 (1993): 815-818.

- Stevens, Marty E. *Temples, Tithes and Taxes: The Temple and Economic Life of Ancient Israel*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006.
- Torven, Samuel. *Hungry Poor: Gathered Fragments*. Minneapolis, MN Fortress Press, 2008.
- Turque, Bill. "Affluent Montgomery County has Pockets of Poverty, Mostly in the East." *Washington Post*, September 6, 2014.
- Utey, Robert L. "2 Corinthians 8." Accessed March 9, 2016.
<https://bible.org/seriespage/2-corinthians-8>.
- Vallet, Ronald E. *The Steward Living in Covenant: A New Perspective on Old Testament Stories*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001.
- Van Slyke, David M., and Arthur C. Brooks. "Why Do People Give? New Evidence and Strategies for Nonprofit Managers." *American Review of Public Administration* 35 (2005):199-222.
- Van Til, Jon. "Defining Philanthropy." *Critical Issues in American Philanthropy: Strengthening Theory and Practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1990.
- Vesterlund, Lise. *Why Do People Give*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Wesley, John. "The Use of Money." Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church. Accessed March 12, 2016. <http://www.umcmission.org/Find-Resources/John-Wesley-Sermons/Sermon-50-The-Use-of-Money>.
- Williard, Chris and Jim Sheppard. *Contagious Generosity: Creating a Culture of Giving in Your Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishers, 2012.
- Wheeler, Sondra. *Wealth as Peril and Obligation*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.
- _____. "Wesley on Money." Ministry Matters. Accessed March 9, 2016.
<http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/429/wesley-on-money>.
- White, Arthur H. "Patterns of Giving." *Philanthropic Giving*. New York, NY: Oxford University, 1989.
- White, Charles Edward. *The Economic Ethics of John Wesley*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1987.
- Worringer, Eric "Luther's Christological Giving and the Welfare State." Master Thesis, Luther Seminary, 2014.

- Wright, Karen. "Generosity vs. Altruism: Philanthropy and Charity in the United States and United Kingdom." *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 12 (2001): 399-416.
- Wuthnow, Robert. *The Crisis in the Churches: Spiritual Malaise, Fiscal Woe*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Young, E. J. *An Introduction to the Old Testament*. London, UK: The Tyndale Press, 1953.
- Youngblood, Ronald F. *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary: New and Enhanced Edition*. Nashville, TN: HarperCollins Publishers, 1986.
- Zimmer, Catherine. "Philanthropy." Learning to Give. Accessed February 26, 2016. <http://www.learningtogive.org/resources/philanthropy>.